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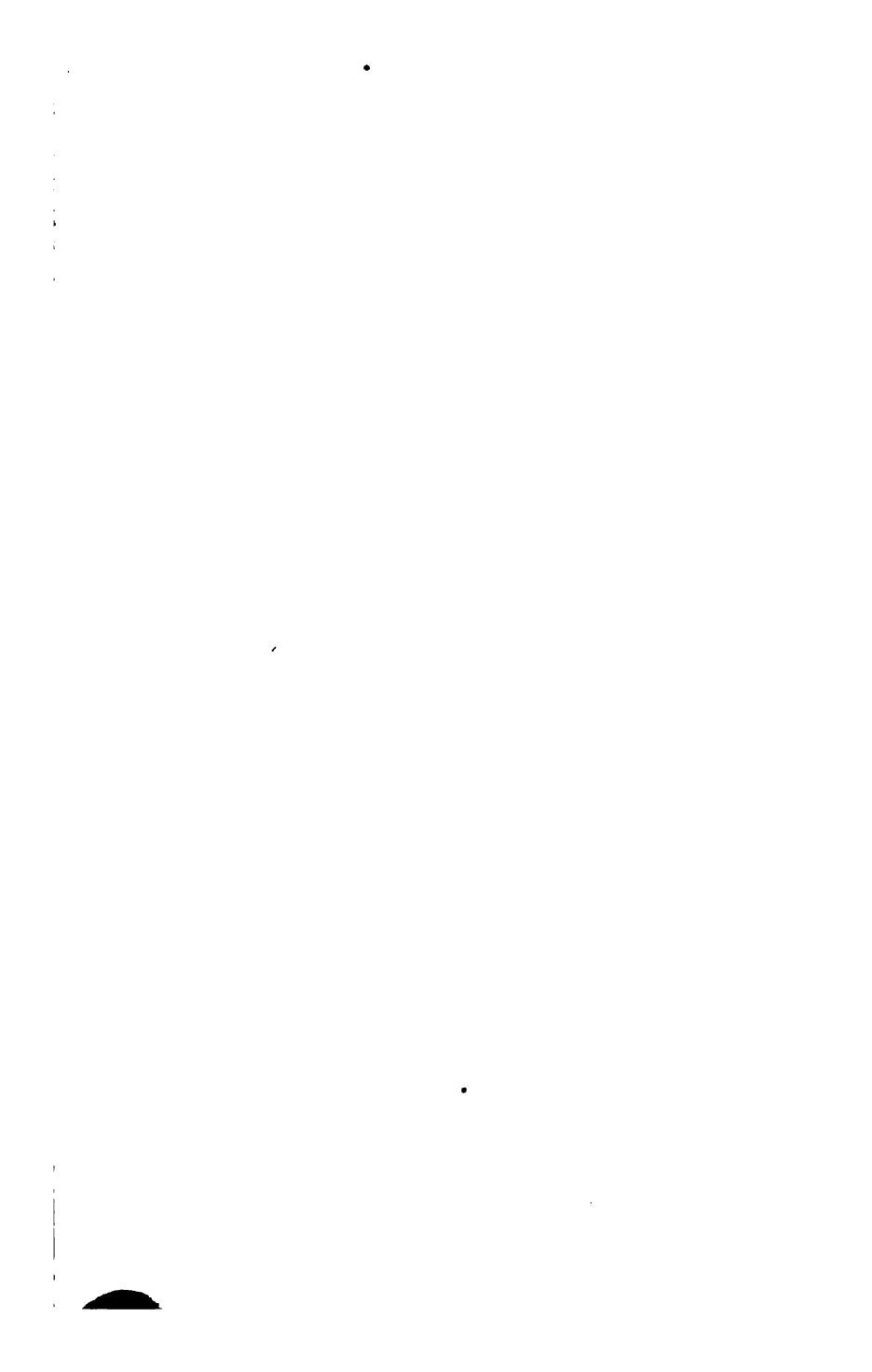
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THE INTERDICT.

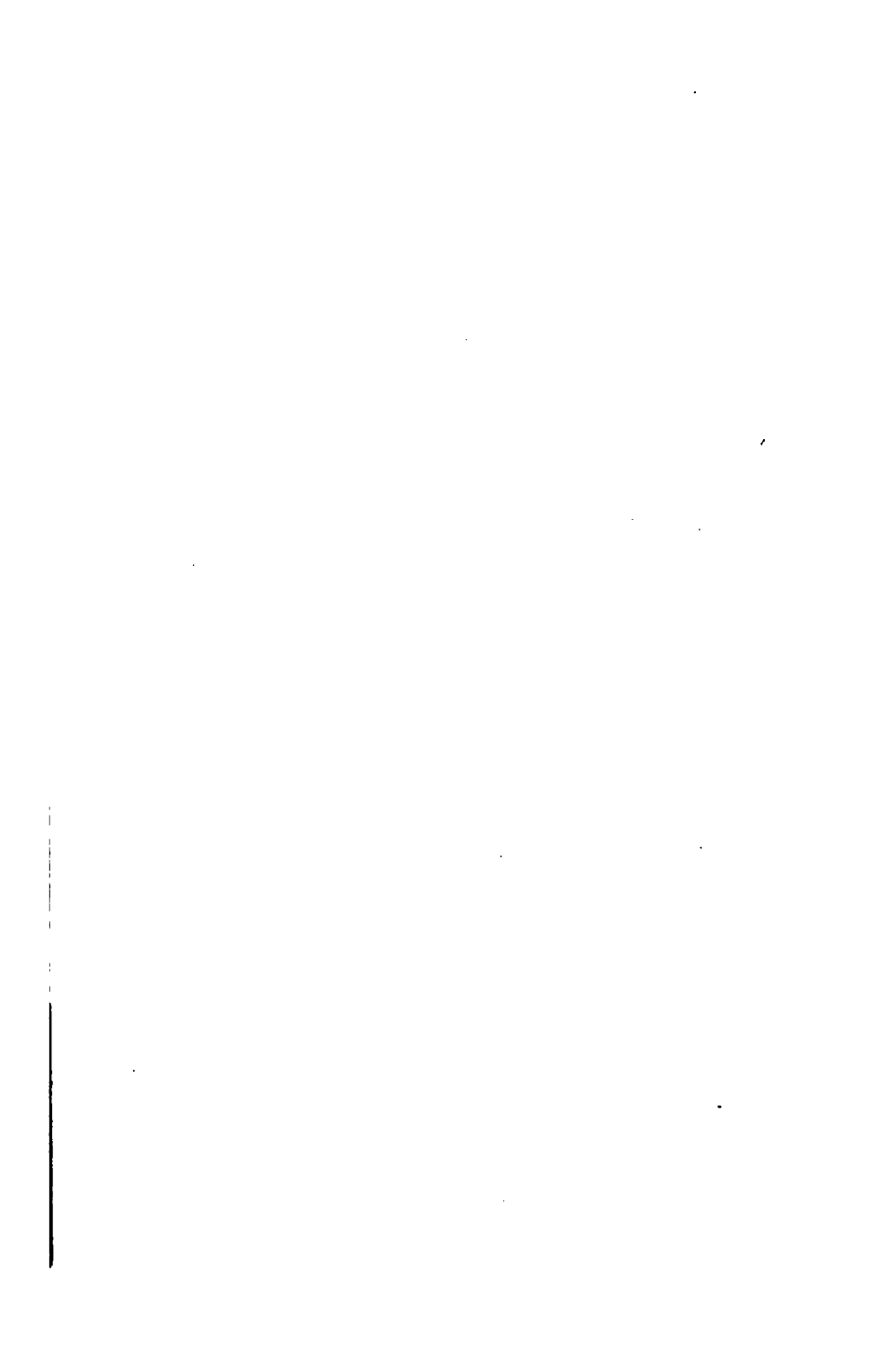
VOL. I.

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THE INTERDICT.



VOL. I.

THE FRIGHT.

By the Author of "*The Merchant's Daughter*," "*Nan*
Darrell," &c., &c.

Ellen Pickering

"This is an extremely well written novel, and quite equal if not superior, to any similar production of the present day."—*Morning Herald*.

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THE INTERDICT,

A NOVEL.

by Mrs. Steward

"Do thou, my soul, the destin'd period wait,
When God shall solve the dark decrees of fate;
His now unequal dispensations clear,
And make all wise and beautiful appear."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



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THE INTERDICT.

CHAPTER I.

I sit entranc'd in mem'ry's silent hall ;
Forward from marble shrines pale figures bend
In pensive recognition. Quickly all
The now fades into nothingness ; the friend
I loved oblit'rates him I love ; the blaze
Which noontide splendours to life's autumn lend,
Is dimm'd by thronging thoughts of calm spring-days.

It may happen that I shall be pronounced vain and egotistical for shadowing forth the following story under the first person, and for placing myself foremost of the *corps dramatique* ; but he of whom nobody else would speak, may be excused for saying a little of himself, and he at whom nobody would look, were goodlier forms in view, should, modestly—it being stated that he must be dragged in somewhere—come forward when he may hope to escape the odium of comparison ; just as

the minor member of a drama shuffles with panting heart to the proscenium, to set the chairs and smooth the cushions for more exalted *debutanti*.

Furthermore, the following sketch will prove that I have little demonstrable excuse for self-complacency. I was a poor-looking weed, whom no physical culture, however salutary, could warm into healthfulness; a pale, abstracted book-worm, with dark-browed deep-seated eyes, which saw no fairer object than a musty classic. A halt in my gait, and a difficulty of utterance, occasioned, not by malformation of the articulating organs, but by sheer fright at finding myself talking, increased to very painfulness my constitutional shyness and reserve.

Of our family circle the next in plainness, but prior to all others in the art of plaguing, was a cousin named Quinilla—Miss Quinny O'Toole as Slauveen, her serving lad, used to dignify her.—Oh, she was a wearisome woman!—not a whit less slighted than myself by comeliness, yet she thought herself a beauty. She was spare in every thing but words. She

had thin red hair, a thin red nose, her lips were thin, her jaws such as we vulgarly call *lantern*; her residue of structure was equally attenuated. She built her beauty on two keen grey eyes, and what she called a splendid foot and ankle.

Our cousin was no favorite of mine. She was verbose by nature and cultivation; her velocity of speech distracted me; it was a hurricane of syllables, drifted, as it were, into one hissing, whistling, never ending sentence. Measured with her ideas her words were in the ratio of a bushel to a grain. Talk of poverty of language!—our cousin never knew such indigence—she could help you on occasion to a lac of vocables, or edge in, generously, the very word you panted to bring out.

Quinilla (she clings to my pen like an officious hair) was not our genuine cousin; she was sister to my uncle's wife, but, fearing we might call her *aunt*, had dubbed herself by a less matronly appellative. She piqued herself on ancient blood, and made boast of her propinquity to the great O'Tooles of Glendalough.

Her sister, my aunt Laurentia, had nothing

but descent in common with Quinilla—She was a blunt, rightminded, cheerful woman; clear in perception (where her partialities did not interfere) and resolute in action; tenacious of her family, and her sister's beauty. The spontaneous kindness of her nature gave an expression of honest interest to her countenance, and a friendly accent to her true-hearted idiomatic style of speech. To superficial observers she appeared merely an outspoken thrifty person:—even I used for many years to wonder how so polished a man as my uncle, Edward Fitzgerald, should have chosen so unintellectual a partner; but I have long learned to value her rectitude of mind beyond the proudest gifts of genius.

And now stand forth ye gentler images to spiritualize my canvass—ye fair and sweet creations, whose childish faces come to me in dreams, whose griefs and joys and warm affections are, as it were, entwined with my identity. And surely we were shrined each in the other's heart, my sisters, even from

Those chequered days of babyhood,
When mirth would tread on melancholy,
And they would seem companions.

Which of you, mates of my thoughtless years, which of you, first, in maiden drapery, shall live upon my sketch-leaf?—If I choose the mirthful, the pensive gently advances her entreating face ;—if I choose the serious, the cherub head, bright with frolic's essence, is waved reproachfully. Come then Marion, my own dear Marion, come.

I cannot well determine in what Marion's beauty lay ; whether in feature, look, or tone. You saw the face was lovely, but could not explain *why* you wished to treasure it in memory, and call it forth at will to gaze at, for many besides Marion have had cloudless eyes of deep deep blue, bright hair, and dimpled cheeks. The beholder was ever doubtful in what her witchery consisted ; before you could observe the regularity of feature you were taken by the life and spirit of the face ; but at every thought this spirit seemed to change.—You loved its sprightliness—'twas gone !—its pensiveness—'twas lost in smiles of arch defiance, petulance, or derision.

The beauty of Helen, my younger sister, was more intelligible ;—a tranquil countenance,

features of a Spanish cast, dark eyes, not sparkling, but singularly penetrating.—An air of diffidence tempered the gravity of her demeanour; this diffidence, however, was occasionally blended with a defensive pride which, when excited, kept down the blushes of timidity. Marion, with all her light-hearted sauciness, was a very coward; the mere accent of severity depressed her; but Helen, when justly roused, would forget her *usual* self in the earnestness of expostulation.

The sisters' characters in other points, too, might puzzle the observer. The elder, quick to resent, and sometimes humourously perverse, could be frightened even into a surrender of her judgment; the younger, careless and yielding in minor points, if convinced that opposition was essential, would manifest a resolute tenacity little expected from one who in the smoother scenes of life was bashfully averse to observation and display. The lot of the one should have been cast in fondness and sunshine; the other was a high-minded creature with a capacity for enjoyment in any sphere of action.

Their tastes and pursuits could as little have been inferred from their outward seeming as their characters. Whatever was marvellous in tradition and mystical in nature Marion's sentiments were akin to; she was insatiate of witch-spun stories, of tales that embody the romantic spirit of chivalry, and revelled in the Runic legends bequeathed by the bards who had accompanied our Northern invaders. Helen's enthusiasm was more subdued, her tastes graver, and I had coaxed her into the paths of scholastic erudition; but while she did homage to the genius, she either could not understand, or would not subscribe to, the sublime assumptions of the early philosophers. She ridiculed my veneration for mad patriots and visionary republics; and insisted that if I continued to bewilder myself with flimsy subtleties I should lose the faculty of distinguishing between right and wrong, and also my reverence for those high ordinances which forbade the abominations so freely practised by my heroes and enacted by my legislators.—But these debates were held in after years; it is in the May-time of girlhood that I now portray my sisters.

For a long time I as little doubted the entity of my mythologic dames and heroes as of my beloved historians and philosophers; and believed as steadfastly in Minos as in Herodotus. Of the world's system and its substances, of the laws which regulate the universe; I knew just as much as those rhapsodists inculcated, who made the planets a chromatic hurly-burly, and the earth a rocking-horse fortuitously formed of dancing atoms; and of the world's modern usages and practices I had just as much idea as a resuscitated Pythagorean might be imagined to possess.

My uncle and my tutor—both were combined in one—was as enamoured of my old scholiasts as myself, though not perhaps as intimately persuaded of the truth and justness of their systems. The world had so ill treated him or some one dear to him, that to shut out its very name he had immured himself in a wild glen near the South-western coast of Ireland. There, severed by almost trackless mountains from the din of public life, he gradually lost even the impressions which communion with busier scenes had made. In proportion

as these had faded, his natural tone of mind resumed its vigour; misanthropy, with all its sour concomitants, departed; he looked back to nothing of the past except to the classic studies of his youth; his books recalled to him the only race of humankind he wished to recollect; even the wholesome teaching of experience, because it brought the base-minded again upon the foreground, was sought to be obliterated.

My good uncle!—I see him now bending forward his patriarchal head, thoughts full of kindness legible in his eye—*Can* I do justice to the benevolence which knew better how to suffer than to witness pain! the self denial practised to encrease the store from which our ragged neighbours were relieved!

My uncle could not hate, he could not even be unkind; his nature wanted the incitement. For every child he had a friendly nod, a half-penny. The very churl would wear a gracious look before him, cheated into courteousness by a face that wore

“The lineaments of gospel books.”

Every thing connected with my uncle in his

mountain home is fresh and prominent—even his old high-backed chair, with each feature of its curious carved work, I can call forth to seat him in—his study chair—the back of which we used to climb, and stroke his head, and turn it from the Median wars to notice our mock combats. In after days grown more sedate, taught—not from reproof—to understand his silent wave, how we would steal each to a favorite nook in this our favorite room, and softly drawing forth a volume, (oftimes a folio more weighty than ourselves) would soon become as rapt in bye-gone days as he was, as intimate with buried heroes, poets, and philosophers.

This study was the scene of noiseless and supreme delight, our port of refuge from Quinilla's clatter, our self-awarded little Goshen. Nor was our studious turn extraordinary: we were children of the rocks and wilds; our tendencies, training, and habits were peculiar; we never saw a toy, we scarcely knew the meaning of accomplishments; we were quite indifferent to the form and texture of our raiment, whether it were coarse or fine, suitable

or unbecoming; we had no one to compete with; between us and the natives of our glen there was just the *grade* which separates the rustic from the clown. Of artificial life we knew no more than what the mimic images in antiquated books displayed to us, or what Quinilla's livelier images at times revealed. We learned just what we wished to learn, and no more; we were never tasked, never praised, at least for our acquirements. Our scripture teaching was not forced and of necessity; it was never made unamiable by penance. Books became our load-stars simply from the unalloyed enjoyment they afforded, other sources of a child's amusement finding no path to our retirement.

Our library was not exclusively a temple for the ancients, albeit the fairest portion of it was allotted to my oracles. Some moderns, mostly English of the Elizabethan age or earlier, had, rather from accident than from good will, found entrance there; and, like intruders, had been assigned a stinted lodgment in a neglected corner, piled between the top shelf and the ceiling. They were eleemosynary guests— in-

mates on mere tolerance—visited only by the moths, until Helen, rather at issue with my philosophy, sought out some clearer system to arrive at truth, and in her voyage of research lighted on the “black letter region.” Curiously examining the long slighted occupants she selected some which were promptly located in a freer quarter, thenceforward her *sacrarium*.

Marion, who had not a particle of taste for any thing in classic story, unless it were for Socrates’ familiar genius, seized upon the tomes rejected by her sister. Her shriek of rapture startled my uncle, then planning with Xenophon the retreat of the ten thousand, and tumbled me from Helicon. Chronicles of Ireland, some in a garb so stiff and antiquated that none but so attached a devotee could have desired their acquaintance; legends in vellum of our Scythic ancestors, glossaries and itineraries with marvellous addenda; an Irish bible of 1681; an Ossian, (the most modern and best dressed of the party,) a well thumbed Shakspeare; Josephus, the Fairie Queen, and Spenser’s state of Ireland; curious annals, Bardic traditions, and, above all, a copious dis-

sertation on Irish faerie and demonology—such were the dust-covered, worm-eaten dainties Marion so clamorously greeted; diet she thenceforth fed upon, to the discomfiture of the old devourers,

CHAPTER II.

Chasing the lessons of maturer age
Come fancy's coinings ; Runes and nursery tales,
And prattled mysteries, the fairy page,
The "once upon a time," which never fails
To silence murmur. Lullaby of pain,
Leader of thought — Fiction—thy halcyon sails
Waft us to childhood's wonders back again.

Thus did we hold converse with the dead,
each in a chosen nook ; oftimes interchanging
thoughts and sympathies, quoting or reciting
from a favored author, and by this commerce
of opinion participating somewhat in each
other's studies. Marion's legends won more
fixed attention than our abstruser themes :
even my uncle was at times detected skulking
from the field of Marathon, to listen to the

feats of O'Driscoll or McCarthy, St. Lawrence or De Courcy. Helen also often deserted *El dorado* for figments as ingenious: while her sister read, she would interweave the graver subject of her own reflections with the chivalric or romantic fiction, and incorporating therewith traits of humble life and "right merry conceits"—such specimens of drollery and untutored sentiment as our mountain clan afforded,—she would shadow out a tale to which, at even-tide, we all became wide-gaping auditors.

Whenever a variety was wanted Quinilla would wedge in some apt absurdity—absurdity at least to our untaught conceptions, in which the world's traffickers obscurely floated. Quinilla was indeed, to us, "mankind's epitome;" the only one of us who knew of life, of conventional, punctilious life—*polite* she called it. She had kept up her early training in gentility by annual visits to Mrs. Bullock, a brazier's wife in Cork, and erst a school-mate of our cousin. This Mrs. B. (thus termed in soft elision by Quinilla,) had lost a *little caste*, but gained encrease of *substance*, by her union with the brazier; and though some *Plebs* related

to the husband were grudgingly admitted to her *routs*, yet still the wife kept up her aristocracy by an interfusion of *tip-tops*.

What a flash would Quinny make in this her yearly issue from eclipse!—I see her at this moment equipped in scarlet riding-dress, pillioned behind Slauveen on Lanty Maw, a testy rat-tailed pack-horse, my uncle's only beast of burthen.

Slauveen was the most accomplished member of the household. There was not a bird or beast in our rough glen whose tone he could not borrow—he seemed engrafted into every tribe, adopted by the sympathies of every genus, and when he wished the creatures followed him. Also, he commanded half a dozen countenances, the which he shifted so adroitly to serve his own and puzzle others' speculations, that the visage nature gave him could rarely be detected.

He had been selected by Quinilla as a fit recipient of her syllogisms; something to exhaust her *erudition* on. When old enough he was appointed *Esquire* to our cousin on her city visits, and drilled into a type of Mrs.

Bullock's week-day shop-boy, and Sunday lacquey. His lady changed the pet name of "Slauveen," bestowed by his compeers of the glen, into "Patricius," and by vociferous remonstrance won him to wear shoes and "look like something human;" still, but at longer intervals, imparting "erudition," which her discreet disciple rejected or received according to his humour, for not even Quinilla's rhetoric could fix Slauveen's attention when Marion's quick, light footstep struck his ear—vainly would our cousin spend her moving eloquence; the page was like a post. I have seen her weep with rage while her Patricius stood a statue of himself, a living log, until the climax of her wrath would burst into the welcome words—"get out!"—The moment after, nothing of Slauveen confronted his insulted patroness, but just his empty shoes; echo had not repeated the command before the barefooted delinquent was already half way up the "Fairies' pathway," directed by Marion's wild, arch, laugh.

Of all the various tribes of indistinct realities dimly revealed to, or dreamed of, by enthu-

siasts the romancers of our glen held most communion with the fairies ; wayward spirits, in conic caps, gold tunics, and red slippers, whose elements were twilight, moonshine, dew, and perfumes. Slauveen, as head of the glen-boys, was particularly noticed by these *etherial substances*. He knew every part of their establishment, their courts and kitchens, double-bedded rooms and stables ; and often was indebted to their bounty for a hot supper and night's lodging. To Helen and me, (the uninitiated in fairy mysteries,) his luminous description of these *visible invisibles* and their nimble exploits was perplexing ; but by Marion, (who would have dived to the earth's centre to embrace a Gnome, or into a volcano for one bright glance of Salamandrine,) these inklings of adventure with the tiny confraternity were received without the drawback of a single doubt.

I have announced myself a feeble, sickly boy, by accident debarred that exercise which might have corrected constitutional debility. My lameness rendered the rough ascents up which our rambles led, distressing. When I

would flag, Helen would sit with me to watch the cloud-shadows sweep across the mountain slopes, while Marion would pursue her upward course, swift as the shadow we were tracing, her guide outpouring his spirit lore for her instruction. Each fissure had its fairy tenant; each pinnacle enthroned a fairy queen; the broken crags that crossed the stream were fairy stepping stones; ravines were fairy bowers; some granite wrecks, rather gigantic for such appropriation, were fairy sugar-loaves; a neighbouring hill was "*hungry*," because the fairies fasted there; every pebble was awarded to these frolic gentles, and every turn of good or evil fortune. Whether you crossed the torrent featly or fell into its bed; whether you bravely climbed the steep or tumbled to its base, you still must thank the fairies, and answer their enquiries, sent in the hollow gust, the moaning breeze and waterfall.

It is cheering to think on one's young times, to muse on home, the home of childhood, the ingle nook, the pleasant tale, the merry argument, in which to differ took nothing from our mutual good will. Even my aunt's quaint

questions, breaking on Helen's story thus—
“And how could Sir Amoric fight so well ten days without a dinner Helen?—and what did Lady Nesta do so long in that deserted place without a change of raiment?”—are now remembered with indulgence, and Quinny's trite interpolations are recalled with great abatement of displeasure.

This rock-bound home, though not my birth place, was the only home that I could well remember; and at a distance of many miles, and many years, remembrance still adheres to it. I see our cottage in the deep ravine; the old pear-tree shadowing the pond in which our merry ducklings floated; the *boreen* winding through the pass, the patch of meadow-land that pastured Lanty Maw; the byre and stack-yard, the turf bank and potato-ridge which furnished labour to our needy clansmen. I see our study window, its diamond panes and leaden frame work; the narrow path, bordered by luxuriant broom which led through a green paddock to a mountain gap, a rent you would have thought was made for our convenience; it gave us prospect of a bay locked in by isles

and rugged hills, a seeming lake, whose waters, 'clear as sky, blend earth and heaven in one imagery.'

Beyond the gap a grassy tongue of land forced itself into the bay, as if eager to meet the babbling wavelets, while these, in turn, seemed with like affection to embrace the little headland and rippled lovingly beneath the cooling shadow of the alders that spread their sheltering arms on either bank. To stand upon the peak which towers above this point and look towards the bulwarks of the glen, you might imagine that volcanic fury had heaved up from earth's buried store, the shattered monuments of a former world, to choke up the little estuary. You might picture the chaotic tumult at its height; deep chasms angrily explode their rock-artillery; a sea of molten granite rolls on heavily; the flood is now up-reared to spread around its desolating tide; when lo! the resistless voice—"Be still!"—The surging waves are fixed and frozen into stone; patches of heath peep forth to beautify the rugged fissures, and giant masses are cemented, and forced to circle in, and to defend

from future tempest, this rescued armlet of the sea, this lonely, lovely inlet, now securely guarded by its frowning sentinels.

But its sweetest charm is lost, (sweetest at least to me,) its complete seclusion, its silence, undisturbed except by chartered guests; the wild children of the soil, the tenants of the heath-crowned hills. The fame of this glen has reached the multitude, and the kindly spirit of its owner has opened paths to its recesses; morasses are reclaimed; plantations fringe the precipices; causeways and roads, (those levellers of barbarism and romance,) are even now projecting; and we may one day see gay barouchettes and sociables, where formerly steep, narrow bridle-paths threw their unsocial, undiverging lines over bog and mountain; break-neck, swampy tracks, often devoted by Slauveen to the patching of Phil McGun, a giant engineer of wizard skill, reported to use spinsters' skulls for paving stones. These malisons commenced whenever he looked forward to conveying Quinilla to the brazier's city residence, a toilsome three day's journey of many halts, esteemed a penance by the in-

glorious Squire, and not much relished by his co-sufferer Lanty Maw.

Such were the defences which in Quinilla's day of juvenility preserved the glen and its inhabitants in primeval wildness and seclusion ; and even when my sisters and myself emerged from childhood, the adventurers were few who broke upon the quiet of our dell, although a rude carriage road had then been formed. Sometimes a boat with a solitary stranger might be descried rounding the little island that shut us from a larger bay of which ours was but an armlet. Sometimes Slauveen would make a shining wonder of being asked the road to "*vallis aspera*." We saw in fact no *gentle-folk* except each other, and heard of none except of the *pigmy gentles*, and Mrs. Bullock's highest bred particulars.

My jubilees commenced with Quinny's leave takings, which I looked forward to, with eagerness intense.—Our cottage was too small to offer refuge from her clamour. The study, a parlour, a store-room, and a kitchen formed the lower range ; the upper was as circumscribed ; so that Quinilla's voice filled all

the space around us—it battled with the atmosphere!

I had another reason for not loving her—she had no love for me, and would now and then refresh me with some town-fangled jeer, significant of my infirmity; nor was she more complimentary to Marion. Helen was the only one on tolerance, although Helen rebutted quite as vigorously as Marion our cousin's vulgar jibes directed at my lameness; but there was something in my younger sister that even fools were forced into respecting; a calm energy of tone, an unpretending self-respect. It may be wondered how my placid uncle could harbour such a plague as Miss O'Toole, but had his wife admitted twenty plagues, bodied forth in twenty poor relations, my gracious uncle could not have mustered sufficient moral courage to dismiss them.

This was the single drawback on our happiness; bating the jostling of Miss O'Toole we moved on monotonously yet merrily within our little orbit, more occupied with the past than with the future, unless indeed with that futurity which is unchangeable. To this our

thoughts would often fly, and image Paradise ; my sketches of this after-state always described blue skies, clear lakes, and silence as profound as that enjoined by the Sage of Samos. I remember wondering, when a child, whether in the range of noiseless pleasure allotted to the just, books would be included, and whether, if the righteous members of the same earthly household were again to be united in a particular location of the heavenly, there was any chance of Quinilla's admission to our fellowship.

CHAPTER III.

“ With graceful ease the maiden sprung
Upon the prancing steed,
And round the youth her arms she flung,
And held with fearful heed.”

WINTER had expended its mists and storms and biting frosts. Spring was advancing. The sparry cone of *Sugar-loaf* glittered like frost-work. The snow had vanished from the rocks and dells, which now displayed a budding carpet of feathery heaths, sea-pinks, and mosses. Lizards, goats, and glen-boys, rejoicing left their coverts; the Fairies, eager for midnight revel, issued forth in hurtling crowds,

to seize upon a moon-beam;—but none of brute, or human, or mixed essence rejoiced half as much as I did; for Quinny's city season was approaching!—in two days she would depart!—I sat whole hours absorbed in reveries of delicious longing; my tremors ceased; my head no longer ached.—Quinilla spoke in tender semi-tones, shut up within her especial snug-gery, discoursing her apparel. i

The robes were fitted on the fortieth time, meeting approval or reviling according as they suited her shape and her complexion. A ten years hoarded stock of bobbins, lace, and bugles, was brought out to add to the adornment, because the occasion was *quite* particular. My sisters and my aunt were, in due time, summoned up stairs to the council; indeed the taste of every one, including our maid Katy, my uncle, and myself, was at this important juncture held in requisition. I was so thunder-struck at her equipment that my utterance, (never flippant,) was cut off—"Oh my!" was all I said; a clasping of my hands told the unspeakable remainder.

Contrasted with Marion and Helen, Quinilla

moved a queen;—their garments of blue camel fashioned by my prudent aunt, their untamed, unplumed tresses, lowered, for once, their charms in my esteem, and made me think, with Katy, that they “looked like nothin” next to Miss O’Toole. I thought of Cleopatra on the Cydnus. My uncle stared as if he did not thoroughly see into the subject;—my aunt ejaculated—“Good gracious!—why Quinilla!”—Marion changed countenance so often that you could not tell whether she was delighted, frightened, or confounded; and Helen hoped that such a mass of plumes and petticoats might not be found extremely troublesome.

This more than ordinary embellishment our cousin had uncoffered to honor the majority of Theodore O’Toole, Esquire, her only brother, who had lately arrived at man’s estate and likewise an estate (entailed) of one hundred and forty pounds per annum. He had spent the first year’s revenue and two months of his valuable life in seeing life in London, and was expected to revisit his patrimonial lands the coming Autumn, to which season Mrs. Bullock had requested Quinilla would prolong her stay

in Cork. The merits of Theodore O'Toole, Esquire, were so elaborately imparted, that even my rapture at the prospect of this long deliverance could not ward off head ache. I slunk out unperceived, and tumbled over Patricius, who sat pondering on the lower stair. He never heeded my descent head-foremost, but grumbled out—"And so you went to see the raree-shew—my lady in full fig: she shan't fig me however!"

"You would not circumvent your mistress, good Slauveen"—said I—"The Spartan boys never—"

"Spartan," he repeated; "I'm neither Spartan nor soused-gurnet, to be made a laughing stock for Mrs. Bullock's shop boy."

"Patience Slauveen, patience," I remonstrated; "the ancient Helots were much worse off than—"

"*He Lots* are no affair of mine sir: my *she Lot* isn't matched by any man alive. Patience *erhishin*!—they may talk o' patience who never felt tight shoes!—How soft she is!—look *there*; them pumps were bought last year, and she shall buy my last years legs before I wear um for her."

"The Greeks wore soles and sandals," I suggested; you can cut the uppers off Slauveen; a thong will serve for sandals."

"But I'm no Greek, and so I won't be spancelled, Master Walter."

Slauveen was in his dogged mood; if he determined that the shoes were short, no argument of mine could lengthen them. Quinilla's jaunt might be postponed, perhaps put off entirely!—He went on.

"I'm to be harnessed with this like any garron, too, may be I am!" He jerked from his fob a red leather belt, with an appendant bright steel buckle cut in glittering facets, and dangled it contemptuously. Quinilla's pug, a brute she got from Mrs. Bullock, came barking and jumping at the buckle: Slauveen caught up the dog, and bound the belt around its middle, keeping his victim passive by a sympathetic whine—"Every one that sees us stops to hiss us" he continued. 'Watch her wig,' will you says one—"watch her boots," says two—"clear the way," says three, 'her skirt's on fire!'—and then the glen lads hallow 'fire, fire, fire!' till I'm downright 'shamed o' both of us and Lanty kicks up behind and spangles us wid

spatters—I won't go, so I won't—I'll swear that Lanty Maw have got the staggers."

In vain I coaxed and argued, Slauveen by kissing the back of his hand, affixed his irrevocable seal to the averment that he would neither convoy Quinny nor her knapsack.

While this debate was pending Miss O'Toole tested the *accurate fit* of each particular robe she drew from her repository: the whining of her tight-swathed favorite diverted her from the momentous question, whether a blue stomacher would match the canary gauze, then under revision. I marked the full pause in her illustrations, and tried to drag away the mulish whelp: even at the instant, severe in youthful beauty, Quinilla issued from her snuggery—

"Is any body callin', Master Walter?" said Slauveen, "I'm bothered with a singing in my ears; it must be Katy sure;—comin' Katy" and off he stalked.

"Patricius," screamed my cousin, "back with yourself this moment: come back I say or—"

The culprit reappeared—"speak," screamed my cousin—"answer—who put that waistband on my pug?"

"Well," cried Slauveen, surveying his preceptress, and clapping his hands in ecstasy—"What a *gownd*! what an enticing *gownd* Master Watty!—Is that a curricule dress I wonder?—bangs Madam Bullock's all to tatters!"

"Patricius," said my cousin, touchingly; "repent and speak the truth; don't run ding dong to the deuce Patricius:—have you not *scrooged* up that poor, dumb, speechless innocent?—I'm always satisfied—as Helen says that Shakspeare says—with pure repentance—don't stand mum-chance—who put that waistband on my pug?"

"It wanted a bit of a stretch Miss Quinilla," said Slauveen; "it wouldn't meet at all at all; and now I know it fits me nicely.—see yourself," he added, unharnessing the brute and girding his own waist with seeming satisfaction.

Notwithstanding this magical suspension of hostility, I felt some odd misgivings touching Lanty Maw. Slauveen might still redeem his vow by gifting his Bucephelas with staggers. Two days, two mortal days, still threw their lengthy shadows on my sunshine—I was now, at seventeen, more covetous of noiseless pursuits than even in my days of sickly childhood.

Quinil'a had lately multiplied her powers of tormenting by regaling us with pathetic recitations from the Speaker—the standard book at Mrs. Bullock's—A delicious summer hung upon Slauveen's sincerity—it was a perilous hold!—At night I stole into the shed which housed our cow and Lanty; I coaxed the sulky animal; I no longer blamed the tyrant who made his horse a consul: had I the power, if Lanty bore off his burden gallantly, he should be stalled an Emperor!—there was no symptom of the threatened staggers—the next night came, and passed away—the animal shewed no illness, but ill-humour. He was duly harnessed and led up to the door. I stood on tenter-hooks with my anxious sisters. The errant-lad was seated; the luggage-pack was carefully strapped on; Maw stretched out his long neck and snorted; the damsel mounted; Maw kicked, and kicked as he had never kicked before; Quinilla caught at Slauveen's gorgeous waistband; the belt gave way; we screamed and Katy whooped—our cousin was sprawling in the duck pond!

Oh! to depict the clamour consequent on this disaster!—the elements of every jarring

horror seemed combined in one loud, lengthened diapason ! the frightened ducks kept up a chromatic qua-ake, Quinilla a sort of shrieking recitative, through which no element of speech could be detected, save "hound ! cheat ! humbug !" applied to Lanty Maw, or to Slauveen, or both.—Katy's contribution to the concert was given in pathetic touches from base to treble and back again—Pug barked incessantly. The glen-boys, uproused by the din, came whooping and hurrooing to see "what *soort* o' fun was goin' on," and lend a hand to make bad worse. The mountain echoes, or the fairies, took up the note.

But high above every stentor of the chorus arose Slauveen's surpassing *pillalu* ! he roared as if a tiger rampant were before him, while Lanty Maw kicked 'fast and furious.' Lanty indeed was the only *actor* of the party ; no one attempted to fish Quinilla from the duck-pond ; the magnitude of the misfortune had paralysed all powers but the vocal : even the glen-boys, when once the game was under fair espial, stood stock still, like other Irish boys in cases of emergency, content with adding their com-

plement, to the aboriginal melody of Slauveen. Thus our cousin lay struggling in an omnium of fetid water, ooze, and duck-weed, not unlamented, though unaided—I could have wept my eyes out, but I was ague-struck and rooted to the spot. My sisters, finding they could not reach the sufferer, (who from injudicious floundering had floated from the bank,) and seeing us staring, shrieking, and inactive, fled into the house for succour. Slauveen was still astride on Lanty. This last, like one bewitched, kept echoing the plunges of Quinilla, perhaps incited by the unnatural concert. Even at this moment I am unable to decide whether the hardened beast performed his ruthless caprioles from fright, from wickedness prepenze, or from the instigation of Slauveen.

My aunt and uncle now came forward.

“What’s the matter Walter?” said my uncle, “what is the matter?—Is Quinilla hurt?”

“Is Quinilla killed?—speak Katy!” said my aunt—“we can’t hear our ears through all this clitter-clatter.”

“And sure she might as well be kilt as have

her darling dress knocked down and murdered," bellowed Katy.

My uncle reprimanded our idle *helps*. Quinilla was hooked out, but her haggard plight awakened such compassion that a spontaneous repetition of the preceding chorus was elicited. —Katy thumped her breast, Lanty recommenced his outrageous plungings. Every fresh inspection of Quinilla's person drew forth a wilder *ullaloo* ;

'Twas like "the roaring of a thousand streams."

Turning to escape I espied two strangers at a little distance, curiously peering at the group, which hung in diversity of attitude around the luckless Miss O'Toole. That these were of good degree was manifest, but I was dubious whether they belonged to Marion's class of cavaliers or to Mrs. Bullock's. They bowed on finding they were noticed : I returned their courtesy and stammered an awkward explanation of the scene. My story did not meet the sympathy I had reckoned on ; they were not the least overcome by my description of the fall ; nay one of them, the handsomest too

seemed very much inclined to laugh. From this behaviour I at once inferred that *he* at least, belonged to the mongrel gentry. Marion's cavaliers were noted for urbanity to maidens in distress, and no ancient heroine I had heard of, ever found herself in more distressful plight than did that unhappy one, who was now extended, apparently senseless, on the bank, her riding dress distilling the aroma of the ill-odoured poppy.

An opening in the line of mourners gave her completely to our view. The handsome youth was choking with laughter ill-suppressed; I reddened at ~~this~~ impertinence; his companion with a rebukeful look, which rather tended to encrease the other's struggles, apologised.— They had been coasting round the bay, he said, and had been tempted by the beauty of the little cape which jutted from our dell, to land and to explore. A cry, which they had mistaken for the national keene, had led them into the ravine: they were strangers, and hoped their error would be pardoned.

There was something wonderfully pleasing in the young man's aspect who thus graciously

tried to cover his companion's levity : the excess of my desire to say something extremely civil, kept me silent. Our conversation had been carried on at a short distance from the scene of wo ; the clamour had sunk into a buzz of objurgation at the unsusceptible Lanty Maw, who, now disencumbered of his freight, was passing his maligners, wisely betaking himself to the shelter of his stable from the thrashings he was menaced with.

" Would nothin' sarve ye, you confounded brute," obtested Katy, " but you must fling the jewel, flump, into the muck-pond? I'll be bound ye wouldn't fling *yourself* there !"

" Didn't I tell you," cried Slauveen, " the sulky garron would never stand that feather? —Oh ! Miss Quinilla, Miss Quinilla, had you been said by me you'd ha' put the feathers up into the pack."

" And ruined 'um," roared Katy.—" they'd ha' been scrumpled all to nothin' !"

" They're scrumpled with a vengeance now !" retorted he.—" We can't change the nature of a baste nor a plum puddin', nor wiser than we are, Katy Mulligan : of all

colours in the sky Lanty could never cotton much to scarlet; split the feather! it made him take poor Miss Quinny for a trooper."

"Wretch!" cried Quinilla, starting from her trance and from the arms of my aunt and Katy,—“Nit of mischief!—Maw took me for a trooper did he?—Cheat, abominable cheat, you'll rue the day you loosed that buckle!"

"Crommell be kind to us!" ejaculated Slauveen, "she heard me through an' through the faint!—I'd as soon ha' thought o' hearin the hair grow upon our cow's back!"

At this turn of the catastrophe, which introduced Quinilla, *viva voce*, the rude young man leaned back upon a crag, pulled out a scented handkerchief and laughed until the tears coursed down his cheeks. I thought this barbarous, for our cousin looked quite shockingly—without her hat, her frills and curls rilling unwholesome drops, her face begrimed! there was one horrid smear which made her mouth seem double. The gentlemanly youth fain would have departed, but the other could not stand upright from laughter, while poor Quinilla gabbled like the ducks she had disturbed, and

Slauveen, finding disavowal non-availing, stood reckless, blinking at the sun. Her rage was waxing fearful, and the young man's mirth encreasing in proportion, when Marion and Helen, who had been searching in my aunt's repository for a grand specific in hysterical or fainting fits, came flying to Quinilla.

No word I know of can express the sudden smoothing of the laughers' features, or the gaze denoting more than wonder which he fixed upon my sisters, while they tried to soothe our cousin. But Quinilla was intractable; every fresh glance at her rueful riding dress, every reminiscence of her expecting Mrs. Bullock, every tender thought of Theodore O'Toole, Esquire, drew forth hot tears and hot reproaches.—“In three days I should have been in Cork—dressing for Mrs. McCarthy's drum!—Mrs. Bullock was to send her *horse and cart and featherbed* to meet me at the five mile bridge; she will think that I am dead!”

“Or drowned in Lough na Paistha!” interpolated Katy.

“Look at my habit, Helen—ruined!—look at my hat—destroyed!—Oh! my feather, my

feather, what an object!—Look at my yellow boots—Where's my pearl broach?—'Twould fret a saint!—Look at my frill too!—Let me alone Miss Marion; I'd rather be boxed, than be bothered to compose myself!—my hat, my habit, my frill, my boots!"—and down she sank despairing.

At the touching enumeration of her losses—which I thought irremediable, and consequently considered the long dreamed of journey utterly hopeless—I was myself not far from shedding tears, and looked with some anxiety at the gentlemanly stranger for correspondent sympathy; but to my amazement the rude one, now, appeared as deeply interested in Quinilla's woes as I was. He started from behind the point of rock which had partly hidden him and his companion, and with a demeanour quite respectful, yet looking also quite secure of welcome, he walked up to my uncle and announced himself without the slightest tinge or hesitation—His name was Sanford, his friend's was Fielding; they were artists on a pleasurable and he hoped a profitable tour; their sketches of the bay and glen

were just completed—they intended visiting a wild pass and lake which lay nearly in the route, the lady, (he bowed profoundly to Quinilla,) had spoken of pursuing—they had hired a vehicle which awaited them at the other side of the bay, by which arrangement Cork might be reached in less time than she had named, would she condescend to accept their escort.

My uncle, though looking at the suppliant, was busy with the siege of Potidea; he collected his ideas for reply, but my aunt on this occasion thought herself entitled to be spokesman.—The young man's offer was extremely civil, wonderfully civil, to people he could know nothing at all about; he would excuse her, however, for demurring—she didn't doubt he was a respectable young gentleman—but—

Here our cousin interposed with smiles and curtsies—She was so *oblegged* so very much *oblegged*: the generous proposal had sunk into her heart; but the unlucky accident occasioned by her footman's negligence, had made her such a figure! she blushed at being seen in such a trim!—her only fashionable riding dress was unfit at present for the city.

Here Katy thought *her* word would slip in aptly—Cork was the finest place on earth for scourers—two dips would send the skirts out o' the vat as good as new; Miss O'Toole had better snap the young man's offer; second thoughts were dangerous; the drum dresses were safe, thank goodness! in the luggage-pack; Miss Helen would lend her a hat and cloak good enough to ride with picture sellers, this last was added *sotto voce*.

While thus Quinilla and the cook harangued, I saw by the twitching of the young man's mouth that he was strongly tempted to another outbreak, but now I felt less angry. The gravest preacher of decorum might indeed have been moved to mirth at Quinilla's softened tone and queenly gestures. Forgetting her extraordinary appearance, which Helen was vainly trying to improve, she simpered, curtsied, waved her hand, and made such odd contortions, that I imagined she had caught the quinsey. Meantime my aunt and uncle were in sober conference standing apart—"Strolling picture dealers!" said my aunt thoughtfully; "he has by no means a poverty-stricken look

—see how his companion stands so sheepishly aloof—there's something of a snigger I don't like—did you remark his shewy ring?"

"Ah Laura," said my uncle, "I have known many a shewy fellow without a sixpence."

"True," rejoined my aunt; "he might be hungry, and all this palaver proceed from wanting a good dinner."

"Then give him one," exclaimed my uncle, and walked into the house.

My aunt approached the stranger, who during this debate had been politely overruling our cousin's faint excuses—She feared she might be troublesome—He vowed the trouble was imaginary; he could without the slightest inconvenience accommodate the other ladies too, if nothing but the want of a conveyance prevented their accompanying their—*mamma*—the last word was uttered dubiously.

Quinilla bridled—"cousin sir," said she, a little tartly; the blunderer apologised—"that discourteous mud had so disguised—"

"You had better go into the house Quinilla," said my aunt,—“a pretty nose you've got!—If you are bent on going, go to-morrow, and talk

the matter over with the young man after dinner."

The painter and Quinilla brightened at the invitation thus implied: she took his offered arm with a tender languid air, and tottered to the cottage. Marion, unconscious that the other arm awaited her acceptance, ran away. Wondering and rejoicing I hastened to include Fielding in the dinner invitation, better able to articulate, now that I understood he was nothing but a travelling picture-dealer.

When my uncle joined us at dinner he seemed to have forgotten the occurrence of the forenoon, and looked at the strangers as if requiring explanation. My aunt nodded twice to indicate we waited for the usual thanksgiving: this he uttered with an abstracted air, so contrary to the deep reverence with which he was accustomed to pronounce the name of God, that I regarded him with some uneasiness. His benevolence however soon prevailed over his transient discomposure: he was careful to supply his guests with the portion of the hungry, and listened complacently to the rattle of young Sanford, who replied with infinite

humour and patience to the thronging questions of Quinilla. She had, by direct interrogatory which no one could evade, ascertained that he was English, and had for cultivation of his talent visited Italy and Greece. I was longing to learn what town now stood upon the site of Sparta, but was foiled by our cousin. She was labouring to bring in Theodore O'Toole ; and something of London which fell from Sanford effected at last the lucky opening. By a rapid and masterly digression she led from the great metropolis to the young sprigs of Irish quality who visited London for pleasure or improvement. She ran through the whole history of Theodore O'Toole, Esquire, his birth, his breeding, his property entailed ; his descent from the ancient Toolles of Glendalough, his relationship to Sir Laurentius, his visit to London, his lavish expenditure, the expediency of nursing the proceeds of his estates, and his intended *come out* as a London fashionist at her friend Mrs. Bullock's. By this gratuitous confidence our cousin accomplished two ends ; she struck Sanford dumb at her family consequence, and displayed a fair sample of her

copious, animated delivery—She concluded with a winning entreaty that her new acquaintances, during their Cork sojourn, would consider themselves *at home* at Mrs. Bullock's.

All this time Fielding sat dumb as the dumb waiter, scarcely venturing to lift his knife and fork, suffering, (my aunt supposed) at finding himself stuck down among people so much above him. This *suppose* was addressed to Helen, whose attention had been hitherto engrossed by Sanford's miscellaneous pleasantries. Self-convicted of neglect towards the unpretending guest, Helen, by addressing him particularly, sought to encourage him into the ease and confidence of his gay associate. But nothing could raise Fielding to the tone of his companion; his replies were made with deference, while Sanford entertained Quinilla with the freedom of a perfect equal, and with phrases so equivocal, that I could not make out whether he was making love or laughing at her. From time to time he cast a glance at Marion, who sat opposite, either to draw her into greater familiarity, or to enlighten her on his ambiguous addresses to Miss O'Toole.

Marion however, though earnestly attentive to the words, seemed quite unconscious of the looks, and only once broke silence. Sanford was picturing the Bay of Naples: my uncle said something of Mount Pausilypus; the young man as courteously submitted to his host's digression as to Miss O'Toole's, and began to expatiate on the beauties of the mountain, when Marion interrupted him by anxiously enquiring whether it were equal to *Stieb Ghoul*. Even Fielding smiled at this national trait: his ready friend, with a meaning look and half bow, answered, "he had seen nothing any where which did not lose by comparison with what he had beheld in Erin's fairy land."

My uncle now rose abruptly—"Take away Katy," said my aunt—"these young men, I see, are anxious to be off.

The strangers took the hint. Sanford made a final satisfactory arrangement with Quinilla, and departed with his friend, promising to be in attendance on the morrow.

CHAPTER IV.

“ And has he then failed in his truth?—
The beautiful youth I adore!”

I PASSED another sleepless night. Either apprehension had made me ungenerous, or there was really something in Sanford's manner, notwithstanding its plausibility, which justified my estimating his sincerity by the standard of Slauveen's. Of Fielding, who had made no profession whatever, my judgment was more favorable. I had agreed with Helen in thinking there was a decorum in his shyness more to be depended on than the gloss of his companion; he seemed, to be sure, as mystified

as if he were regaling with Marion's aerial acquaintances, his humility encreasing with our condescension, while Sanford conversed with as much assurance as if he had been feasting with the glen-boys.—Marion had demurred at our sentence; she could not explain why, except that an excuse for confidence might be found in personal attraction. The one artist, she observed, was better looking, the other not so good looking as Walter. My aunt decided that Sanford was smitten with Quinilla, and that a few meetings at the Bullocks would *clinch* the affair.

My uncle had forgotten the entire incident, and seemed moon-struck when appealed to on the subject. Quinilla, by a conscious simper, and an air of studied indifference, denoted that she had settled the business to her complete satisfaction, and Katy, inferring placability from the softened demeanour of Miss O'Toole, when she lighted us to our respective dormitories hoped we would say a good word for Slauveen. "The creature," she added, "is starved with the grief—never took a

morsel between his miserable teeth since the morning, and has half murdered Lanty Maw!"

I rose with the lark. The day was unpromising, and Sugar-loaf wreathed with a mist. Our breakfast was un-social—Marion looked anxious; Quinilla's flights were restrained by the clouds: Helen, too busy to speak, was sedulously adorning with gumflowers her own plain straw hat. My uncle seemed conscious that things were not keeping their usual smooth course; he swallowed his tea and retired to the study. My aunt fidgetted, pushed away her cup and hoped the young men would come early. A doubt of their coming at all had occurred, it appeared, to none but myself.

I withdrew to the window—Marion followed me.—"The haze thickens Walter; it will rain, —I am sure it will rain."

I looked dismal. Marion rallied.—"Slauveen however augurs a fine day: he quotes the ducks and pigs—their prelude to bad weather has not been given.—Look, there's a patch of blue!"

With a joyous laugh she turned to announce

the happy omen, just as Fielding entered, followed by his friend. Involuntarily I echoed Marion's laugh, and rapturously shook the young man's hand, who looked startled at this warm reception. Quinilla was in a fever of delight; she squeezed Sanford's hand as tightly as I did Fielding's, giggling—"And how d'ye do to day?—how kind to be so punctual!—I thought you'd never come—a lovely day—looks a little rainy—will you breakfast—do—we had best be off;—give me the hat Helen—what a dowdy!—How the Bullock's will all stare!—sit down—sit down—I'll just do my hair and be with you in a moment.—Sister, see that Patricius is in livery and ready to attend me."—Off she tripped.

The change in the deportment of the strangers very much surprised me. Sanford hung back, and Fielding took the lead; not indeed with the free tone of his companion, but with the bland address which had captivated me on our first encounter. The familiarity which in one stood forth offensively, in the other was modestly, I may say gracefully insinuated; he saluted all with equal cordiality and respect,

while Sanford, regardless of the mistress of the house, attached himself to Marion and Helen, venturing again, but more directly, to propose their accompanying Quinilla. Marion laughed in his face at the preposterous suggestion: Helen raised her eyes with an air of quiet astonishment; my aunt returned thanks for his civility, but assured him the *children* never quitted home.

One might have inferred from the stare of our new acquaintance that my simple aunt, instead of a reply, had propounded some abstract question. My sisters, in truth, although childlike, could scarcely be called children; the younger, Helen, was my senior by a year. My aunt now introduced a string of injunctions respecting Quinilla, to which the self-elected escort was completely silent, but which Fielding promised to observe, very respectfully bowing to a vague intimation that the friendly Mrs. Bullock might be found a convenient acquaintance.

In our commodious little dwelling neither bell nor gong was required to assemble the family, or call in the servants; my aunt, from

long habit, could at once pitch her voice to the exact note of summons for each of our circle ; she sounded a treble chord for Katy, a bass for Slauveen ; and the deep key now brought the *Esquire* upon the carpet. He appeared in a costume more than usually light, admitting air through sundry gaping apertures. The uncharitable would have surmised, from the uniform fashioning of the drapery into which his eorduroy dittoes were torn, that they had been lacerated thus for effect, as also that, to compass some mysterious end, his countenance had been so obscured by bog-water or other indigenous dye-stuff as to lose its pretensions to the human.

“What a pickle!” cried my astonished aunt.—“Put on your livery—make haste—make haste Slauveen ; put on your livery.”

“’Tis on,” said Slauveen.

“On !—and what tore it pray ?”

“The cow,” said Slauveen.

“The cow !—and what blacked your face ?”

“The fright,” said Slauveen.

“The fright !—what fright ?”

“Miss Quinny’s—her disasther took away

my color; I'm very poorly—thought myself the live-long night a bunch o' barley-corn an' Lanty Maw a munching me."

"Rogue," said my aunt, "you can color a story still; put on Master Walter's cast-off pepper and salt—make haste."

The dialogue now became serious; Slauveen's every shift was worn out; he was reduced to bare-faced disobedience, and stoutly declined attending our cousin. Miss Quinny couldn't want him to 'tend on her *now* she had two tight lads at her tail. Who knew but them painters would turn out a pair o' pick-pockets—Miss Quinny might afford a wrinkle in her character, but what had *he* to live on but his little bit o' character?—he had nothing on earth but his character, and he wanted to keep it.

My aunt, shocked at inuendoes which so shamelessly glanced at our guests, rated Slauveen very roundly—I stole a look at them, anticipating their wrathful appendix, but they seemed diligently examining the carpet. Our recreant Esquire was twirling his thumbs, as if deeply impressed by my worthy aunt's homily,

when Quinilla was heard—"Be careful of poor pug Katy—Does the cloak look shabby?—The hat is rather motherly isn't it?—Give Patricius the vallise."

She entered with the prettiest flurried air imaginable, but recoiled, dumb-stricken, at sight of the battered Esquire.—"Patricius!" she exclaimed.

"Miss Quinilla," drawled Slauveen, the corners of his mouth curving upwards like an idiot's—"did you want me Miss Quinilla?"

"Want you Sir—I *suppose* so indeed."

"I thought you wasn't *sure* you wanted me," he retorted "and so I gave up goin. Good bye, Miss Quinilla—bright be your eye in a fog!—May we never lose you but where we'll find you.—*sonuher huth*! a good husband to you, Miss, soon an' suddent."—He had been shuffling to the door, he now made a dart and exit.

"Sister," cried Quinilla, "will you tamely endure such rebellion!—The O'Tooles to be brow-beaten by half naked rabble!—to be bearded by boys! as Cato says."

"Madam," said Sanford, rising, "I admire

your firmness, your fecundity of argument; the reptile deserves lapidation: I have been myself, so heart-wounded by the caitiff's insinuations, reflecting on *my* honor madam, and on *your* discretion—base hints which must have awakened in the bosoms of your friends suspicions of the purity of my intentions—that I am compelled, with the bitterest regret, to relinquish the honor of attending you.”

It would be difficult to say which looked most crest-fallen at these words, my cousin or myself—Quinilla recovered first—“It is not for me to draw back at such a juncture, Sir,” said she, loftily; “such proceeding would argue unpardonable caprice—ingratitude—worse than the winter’s tooth, wouldn’t it Helen?—What!—I suspect the honor which breathes in your every lineament—never Sir!—I deliver myself to your guardianship with unsophisticated trust—I am ready to attend you to the boat Sir, and Katy shall carry the valise.”—She extended her hand with winning benevolence, but nobody took it.

Sanford kept retreating to the door, stammering excuses and regrets, vituperating

Slauveen as the cause of the bitterest disappointment he had ever experienced. I groaned, and was giving the matter up, when Fielding came forward.—“Madam,” he said, taking Quinilla’s hand, still awkwardly stuck out as if palsied by pure consternation—“Madam, you have been solicited to accept our escort; I solicit you still: I promise to conduct you to your friends.” He turned to us.—“You may feel secure of your relative’s safety; my sister should not be more strictly protected.” He put Quinilla’s arm within his, shook hands with my aunt and me, bowed to my sisters, and not omitting to leave his adieus for my uncle and thanks for his hospitality, he quitted the room and the house before I had recovered from my panic-fit. He was followed by his friend, who was followed by Katy, bearing the valise. I had the discretion to hasten after, and attend them to the point, still dubious of the ultimate result. I watched the boat until it lessened to a speck, while Katy kept bawling behind me—“Mind the luggage—mind the luggage Miss Quinilla—there’s more rogues than are hanged in the world—keep all your eyes about you *avoorneen*.”

CHAPTER V.

A cheery board, a cozie hearth,
A joke for rough and sunny weather,
A conscience clear o' coil, are worth
The *gowd* of a the *warld* *thegither*.

How often during the more serious incidents of my after life have I thought on this adventure; on the importance with which I had invested an accident, ridiculous and apparently inconsequential; on the even current of that happiness which a straw like this could interrupt, and on the extreme selfishness which—to gratify a morbid desire for uninterrupted devotion to purposeless studies—led me to rejoice at the folly of our poor cousin in thus committing herself to total strangers!

On what seemingly inavertible occurrences sometimes hang our happiness and misery ; yet if we dispassionately trace to their sources those evils, which, from an overweening self-approval, we are disposed to consider inevitable consequences of pre-ordination, we shall find that most, if not every case of mischance might have been averted, at the very least mitigated, had we held in subjection our selfish influences, and summoned the higher powers of our nature to draw up our rule of action. Had I upon this occasion controlled my besetting weakness, and called upon my uncle to dissuade Quinilla, the evils attendant on her giddy adventure certainly had been avoided.

For some moments I did not believe that our cousin was gone ; my vision was charmed ; it gave to me twenty returning boats and twenty Quinillas !—I turned towards home—her voice was behind me !—I entered the house, looked around, listened—she was gone ! actually gone ! not for a month as heretofore, but for three, perhaps for more !

My aunt's bustling interrogatories assailed me—What did I think of Quinilla's going ?

did I think the men respectable? she hoped no *row* would ensue, but she had an odd suspicion that something was wrong, from their looks at each other; they might both be in love with Quinilla.

I stared, and quoted Sanford's behaviour.

"All pretence," said my aunt; "such stratagems are common in love—sheer mummery! How *chop-fallen* Sanford looked when Quinilla accepted his friend! Fielding was ready enough—there is certainly something uncommon about her."

And now our little household sank into that heart-satisfying peace which leaves you without words to express your enjoyment. There are days of one's life for which we would readily exchange many of our years, days into which an age of happiness seems crowded; such days were mine at this period of my history; my own and external nature in wondrous harmony; the skies were red, the torrents hushed, the wild flowers bright, and I caught a healthful spirit from the softened atmosphere.

No premonitory tingling now heralded the shock inflicted by Quinilla's battery, for a day

or two indeed, I had, merely from habit, occasional starts and twitches. Marion and Helen felt, though perhaps with less intoxication, the comfort of a quiet home, a quiet ramble. The little headland was my chosen lounging place ; there would I read and watch the trout springing at the may-fly, or lying like myself in blissful stillness.

How memory loves to picture this little cape ! conjuring up the bay's enchanting panorama, its isles, its shady nooks, the fairies' rock-stair, garnished with holly, myrtle, and arbutus, down to the level of the dark red moor ; the spring winding through fringy shrubs or bubbling over variegated pebbles, and leaping from a little promontory to meet its fellow stream upon a lower mound, both there uniting, and trickling from a heath-bank to the bay.—The soothing music seems restored of gentle showers plashing on the alder-leaves, the buzz of startled bees, the murmur of a far off cataract. Here I wondered and I worshiped, as in a vast sequestered temple, an earnest votary.

At some distance from our retreat was an

Island crowned with a dilapidated mansion, approachable at low water by a bank of uncemented stones. On the main-land side this insecure causeway communicated with a rough pass, leading by a toilsome ascent to the deep recesses of a tarn or lough, which nature had amused herself by scooping in the summit of a rock. Thence issued a brawling rivulet, high banked with copse, and bordered by a foot-path, which, fluctuating with the windings of the channel and with the undulations of the moor land, now sinking to the level of the stream, now rising to the height of the embankment, terminated abruptly at what Slauveen denominated a *fairy table*, projecting a few feet beneath the brow of a cliff. On this romantic site was perched a hut or *sheeling*, hedged in by a low rocky parapet. The rivulet having gathered in its course a thousand springs—here became contracted, and, with the force of a rapid, dived into the matted foliage beneath; its descent was almost hidden by a profusion of larches and other trees, which shot out from the steep rocks of either bank. The stream again appeared at various intervals,

now swift, now creeping, tracking the brown heath, or tumbling from a precipice, until it forced a passage to the bay. The hut looked down upon this stream, and was but a short mile from its source. Beheld from the bay, through a chasm in the nearer hill boundary it looked like the nest of an eagle. It had been built by a herdsman who had pastured his half-tamed flock upon the mountain, and was now the home of his widow, Grace, or as we used to call her Granny McQuillan, the mother of Slauveen and the witch of our glen.

To this eyrie and its inmate Marion had been early introduced. Grace and her citadel were exactly suited to my sister's appetite for fairy-lore. Grace could foresee famine and peril in the signs of Heaven, make hills and streams divulge descent of rain, and read in the nocturnal luminaries, as in an almanac, omens portentous of good or evil hap.—Our cottiers consulted her horoscopy, their wives her chiromancy: each nail-spot was a symbol of past, present, and to come; by her divination daughters in the candle saw a wedding-

ring or winding-sheet, and sons decided whether the splinter bouncing from the fire promised a purse of gold, or head broke at a *pattern*. She could adjudicate a cause without a lawyer, detect a thief without a catchpoll, deliver laws and make them binding.—In short Grace was the Brehon* of our rustics, a woman of marvellous endowments, or, rationally speaking, of observation and acuteness far above her class—not a repulsive witch, in sooty blanket, with sharp gray eyes, hooked nose and nails, brandishing, or riding on a broomstick—hers were full brown orbs, in which a waggish keenness twinkled through the stately gravity put on to suit her legislative and predictive functions. The face was a companionable face, experienced and demure—one that you could trust to for an echo of your laugh; one that when you said a clever thing would reciprocate your wink; a countenance that kindled into youth when she dealt out her *pisheroquest*† of houses *once so ancient*, chronicles of the

* Brehons. Lawgivers of the ancient Irish.

† Long stories.

great O'Sullivans. Not even Helen could tell a story like her ; she fixed you to one posture, your eyes upon her face, your mouth agape to gather in the wonders, for fear your ears might not be wide enough. Her tales of *Stun-shac** would keep you *croonkled* in her chimney nook for weeks and fortnights—Scheherazade was nothing to our *Shanachie*.†

The Irish peasant has a talent for invention, for beguiling you of credit, and extorting pelf and pity even from the morose and marble-hearted. People call it *humbug*—they may call it what they please ; no boor of other land can match it : 'tis a knack which keeps Pat lively when he is starving, the coin he often pays his rent with.

Dame McQuillan's sorcery was always well intentioned—the spirits she evoked were the better principles of human nature—the most suspicious and superstitious of her feudatories never laid to Grace's door the blight of crops or cattle, sore hearts or heads, or shiverings, or staggerings, or other Irish visitations and

* The fairy-host. † Chronicler.

vexations.—Her herbary was culled to heal disease; her wit was taxed to heal disputes; her presages called on prudence to avert calamity. The squabbler wondered how she could foresee the bloody nose he brought home from the *faction*; the idler, when his hay was swamped, remembered Grace McQuillan had forewarned him. She was the umpire in all affairs of *scrimmage* or *kick-up*, and frequently averted a *knock-down*: in cases of assault and battery she was the Jury who awarded damages — she saved many a broken heart by winning the inconstant swain; through terror of her judgment, to ratify the “hand and word” he had plighted to his sweetheart. The lady spouse by Grace’s interference oft escaped a drubbing; the male came sober from his work, wisely making a *detour* to avoid Shamus Brady’s *public*, and the tempting savour of *scolleen** well mixed and *screeching* hot.

In virtue of her judicial dignity Grace thought herself entitled to depart from that

* A brewing of beer and whiskey, flavored with butter, eggs, sugar, &c.

happy negligence so conspicuous in the persons of our female peasantry—dishevelled ringlets unacquainted with the vexing comb; classic drapery of “woven wind,” disdainful of the vulgar wash-tub; feet spurning the tanned and Connamara coverings which would but hide their delicacy and impede their fleetness. Grace blended the Scythic with the more modern Irish costume; her saffron-tinted ’kerchief was twisted conically in *birred* fashion above a well stuffed fillet, over which her shining hair was neatly rolled; her capuchin, (a short rug cloak of various colored stripes,) was edged around the throat with yarn fringe a foot in length, and fastened with a silver bodkin; a crosslet of like metal (exhumed by some fortunate disciple from a neighbouring bog) was pendent from a rosary to which all her followers had contributed a bead; her bright blue quilted petticoat of substantial fabric descended barely to her ankles, which last were cased in purple lambswool, adorned with scarlet clocks and stoutly soled; shoes she contemned as promoters of excrescences and subversive of free motion. In truth our witch

though nearly forty, might, with a spur, have outrun Atalanta. The holly wand she carried was not used for staff, but symbol of her functions. Grace partly owed her fame to her agility, which, assisting practised forecast, brought her in the nick of time to figure on the stage, falling as from out the moon into the middle of a convivial *scrimmage*, or standing, apparition-like before the married clown, and snatching the shillelah, uplifted at his lady-love, with which he was proceeding, tenderly, to *argue* a matrimonial difference. Nor were Grace McQuillan's dress and practices more at variance with the national taste for neatness than were her house and *furnitory*.

But before I lead you to her audience-hall you must attend me to the cabins of our less gifted neighbours.—Divest yourself of all romantic associations ; it is to no rose-mantled Elysium of rustic tenants I conduct you ; no ivied porch awaits you ; no woodbine clammers through the lattice.—Wade through that fetid bog ; avoid the stagnant pool which settles at the threshold ; stoop beneath the low browed-lintel and enter this hovel, reeking with soot,

and filled with bitter smoke, through which a sullen fire seems struggling for existence, even in the blinding cloud it has produced. View through your galled eyes the blackened walls, the naked rafters, the damp clay floor, the settle with its loathsome bedding and its wretched occupant; gaunt, feeble, starving, lifting his seared orbs to catch a ray of pity from the casual visitor. Alas!—that visitor must want a heart who could without a burst of sympathy behold the penury of an Irish hovel!—Look around—look at it well—think of your own children, healthful and joyous, seated at your board, sure of their portion of that substantial joint of which the poor Irish child can scarcely tell the name.—Look round a second time—recall the ruddy faces of your darlings, and then mark that pale, shivering babe, piteously gazing in the mother's face, a face from which misery has swept the human character!—Look at that squalid brood, snatching the garbage from the filthy tub—your fellow creatures grappling with brutes for offal, the carrion at which dogs would sicken!—Wonder not that if they grow, they grow into

the savage—already the wolfish impress is acquired, even in infancy, in prattling infancy—Alas! theirs is no prattling infancy; they are prematurely silent, prematurely old; they learn not to earn, but to despoil—the little hands that should have been taught to dig are lifted up to beg—the young lips that should have parted with a whistle to urge the lagging team, are opened but to whine “a halfpenny your honor, one halfpenny.” The jocund spirit and ready wit, imparted by a bounteous hand to lighten hardship, are perverted to over-reach and to extort, and sinewy frames and active intellects are early marred, which with better training might have “scattered plenty o’er a smiling land.”—May some nobler feeling be called forth in those whom curiosity first conducts into such a hovel!—may they co-operate with the wise and good in raising these neglected beings to the standard of humanity!—This is no high-wrought colouring, no passion-moving fiction; such were, and still to a great extent such are, the homes and aliment of Ireland’s peasantry.

But I have wandered from Grace McQuillan.

Marion's description of her granny had drawn Helen to Carrig-a-Phooka*—thus aptly was the sheeling designated—and Helen had wheedled me to brave the horrors of exertion and an uphill ramble. The day appointed for my presentation to the Irish Pythia was sharp and wintry; I was then a wayward little urchin, wedded to my study-nook. I entered on the task with languor and repugnance; the gloomy roadway through the pass must have been projected by the far-famed Phil McGun to exemplify the line of beauty, by imitating the tortuous wriggings of an eel. Shivering and weary I rested on the fairy-table;—a table by the way more suited to a Titan—it held the witch's hut, her haggard, piggery, and poultry-yard, with an ample turf-kish, providently stocked. The blue smoke mounted cheerily from an aperture between the roof-tree and the gable. This gave me life, supported by my sister, to limp towards a wicket, which, obedient to Helen's command, given in pure Irish, flew open. I stepped over a high

* The fairy's rock-hold.

threshold, absorbed by visions of Eleusinian mysteries, in which a Hecate with her grim familiars darkly floated.—But oh, the fair transition to reality!—the comfort of the little chamber—the refreshment of a soft rush hassock to my sickly limb—the reviving glow communicated by a flood of sunshine streaming, through knotted panes of coarse green glass and lighting up the rustic treasures of this audience-hall!—a couch of plaited straw, a coverlid bleached upon and perfumed by the heather; a cupboard hospitably unclosed, displaying pans of goat's milk, and honey-comb so white and pure it seemed the store reserved for the queen bee.—A tapestry of rushes curiously interwoven, and strung with picture offerings of Saints, from Columba to St. Kevin hid the walls. The floor indeed, was of primeval rock, but the indentations had been filled up by the fairies or by Grace's indefatigable skill, and the cold was tempered by goat-skins and a patchwork of shreds and parings—the scraps rejected by the wasteful were here converted to a purpose, and nature's meanest gifts ingeniously employed. An inner room

disclosed a dresser garnished with pewter, serving for plates and looking-glasses ; a settle used for couch and wardrobe ; a spinning-wheel and wool-combs, (the sources of this wealth,) a three legged stool, (the tripod of the priestess) a cozy hearth on which a brindled cat sat purring ; a bright turf fire sending its lively sparkles to a cauldron linked on an iron hook which seemed to grow out of the chimney. The smoke in finding issue, infused its saving essence into the bacon-flitch that hung above the hob. All this array, with minor additaments as simple and as pleasant, was revealed ; the whole in correspondence with the presiding goddess, who, even while she welcomed us, plied fast her knitting-needles, puss now and then darting out a paw to clutch the dancing worsted-ball.

A few pounds would have purchased the cot and its contents, and yet it seemed to me that every comfort was assembled there, even to a book-shelf, though its freight was scanty—the Pilgrim's Progress, (aunt's donation) the Seven Champion's, Valentine and Orson, the Chronicle of Henry Marlborough, (bestowed

by Marion,) and some loose leaves on martyrology graphically illuminated—St. Bridgid most conspicuous, carrying beneath her arm her own head, grimly peeping from a *scrabag*.*

Little wheedling was necessary to induce a second visit to the Sheeling. I never in my life felt happier, perhaps never quite so happy, as when basking on dame McQuillan's sunny window-ledge, with Bunyan in one hand, and a buttered slice of oat-cake in the other; my sick leg lifted carefully, and laid upon the softest hassock, while Grace promised a decoction of her brewing which if it *wouldn't* cure would *mend* it.

The little casement commanded a view unrivalled in our glen, often diverting my attention from Christian and Mr. Worldly-Wiseman. Beneath the window-ledge the rock receded boldly half way to the base, and then again advanced, sloping to the bottom of the dell; the seams and fissures of the precipice were garnished with wild myrtle, wavy osiers, club moss, arbutus and holly. At the foot of this

* Potato basket.

declivity the rivulet I have already pictured, increased by many mountain tributaries, toiled among rocks and reeds to a short distance, then dived precipitously through crags and roots of trees, emerging at intervals like a line of light. The opposite bank displayed a self-erected amphitheatre of larches, and stag-headed oaks whose antlers glittered in the spray flung upwards by the fall. A broad deep chasm in the mountain boundary, sweeping to the bottom of the dell, revealed the distant bay, its woods and silvery coves, with a side prospect of the Island distinguished by the ruin and the causeway.

Grace was not an eleemosynary witch; she levied no contributions, although her *villeins* would have willingly subscribed their mite towards her housekeeping, which they firmly believed the fairies had a hand in. The inert and thriftless are sceptical of the vast returns of industry; they cannot realize those fractions which often form the basis of the prosperity vulgarly imputed to good luck—therefore our mountaineers ascribed their witch's well-doing to the favor she found with the *good people*.

What kept her clothes so new?—By what, but a fairy-stroke could all *thin* snippets come together for a carpet?—She had always a bit of *baccy* for old Mike!—she bought blind Johnny all the duds he carried—Where did the money come from?—Sure Jock McQuillan left his *Wid*y but a *modicum*! a taste o' wool, a quarter of a leaky boat; may be he might leave a sheep or two, or an old sow—that would go a *poor* way to *purvide* for old an' blind an' cover the bottom of the meal kist!—No—'twas sure as death the fairies, an' good luck to um! had lent a hand to furnish Carrig-a-Phooka.

It was from Dame McQuillan that Helen had acquired the rudiments of usefulness, the tact to serve her fellow creatures. Improving on her teacher's system of reclaiming *adults* by awakening wonder, and forcing superstition to aid in the reform, she sat about preventing barbarism by instructing *juvenals*, imparting to the young the knowledge best suited to their wants and to the counteraction of their most sturdy despot, indolence.—An arduous task!—but Helen was not easily discouraged. The tiny idlers of the glen were gradually lured

from sprawling in the pig-sties, to exercising in the island-ruin I have mentioned, in which Helen had established what she called her baby-house. The children were soon accustomed to her tutelage and emulous in obedience.—It was beautiful to see the little stupid faces brightening with intelligence as she explained her scripture apologue or told her well-spun baby figment.—Instruction stole upon amusement, introducing novel play-things; wool-combs, a spinning-wheel which served for the whole class, shuttles, and knitting needles. These were cheap and easily attainable through Dame McQuillan, who journeyed with the products of her labour once a month to the next town. Books for such novices were not procurable, and had they been, Helen had not the means of purchase; her books were in the trees, the stones, the running brooks; she taught the children in their native tongue, and taught them well; they learned to work, to weed, weave rushes; to name the various herbs and use them, to tie up their elf locks and wash their faces. Judging by these pigmy essayists I should decide

that the most puzzling riddle for a child lies in the adage—"truth is wisdom." These tyros in morality seemed to possess intuitive conviction that falsehood was the surest shield in all extremities; but even this grand problem Helen had simplified to their capacity, and she was proceeding soberly to christianize our little heathens, when Quinilla, who had an aptitude for intermeddling, tracked my sister to her haunt, and spoiled all. She *would* assist; she had tried her plan upon the little Bullocks—Mrs. B— would have had her publish it; the little B's could spout whole speeches from the Speaker. She would undertake to teach that blue-eyed little girl "blow winds and crack your cheeks!" in no time.—The frightened children flew helter-skelter, like wild bees; no coaxing could collect the hive, until the bugbear would betake herself to Mrs. Bullock's.

Even the benefit I derived from Dame Mc Quillan's lenitives was interrupted by this living bur; she was always at my heels when I wished to sneak off to the sheeling. Just as I thought I had escaped her. the scream *in all* of "Watty, why—why, Master Watty, can't you

as well go easy Master Watty?" in one unmodulated monochord, would set my heart beating five hundred in a second. The candid will no longer wonder I rejoiced that we were rid of her.—She was not a plague—not *one*—she was ten thousand !

CHAPTER VI.

" Yes, there are times and there are places
When flams and old wives tales are worth the graces."

AND now our interrupted blessings, (never fully valued until suspended,) were renewed—our mornings in the study, our rambles to the head-land, our visits to the sheeling and the Island-ruin, whither Helen once more endeavoured to decoy her half-tamed covey. The little brood at first was quite intractable, but one recovered stray would lure a second, and so on, till the callow nest again sent forth its

lings on a gloomy landscape. At this time all was sunshine ; the evening that closed upon our happy day, was a joyous wind-up, particularly if it brought with it just that chilly feel which countenances a fire in June, and feet upon the fender. The current in my veins flowed languidly ; I was as susceptible of cold as clamour ; therefore one chimney corner was always assigned to me ; my uncle occupied the other ; Marion and Helen, linked arm in arm to fit the vacancy, were wedged between us, the latter freighted with a story. My aunt was far too thrifty to let an East wind make her idle ; she had not *time* to feel cold ; between her and us was placed a small round table, bearing lights, and household stuff which “wanted looking over”—while Helen kept her immediate auditors mute as marble effigies, fearful lest a cough or splinter-fall should interrupt the tale, my aunt rattled her shears and bodkins, snuffed her long sixes, hunted for her thimble, and laughed when she should have cried, protesting at every pause the story was enchanting, though she seldom heard a word of it.

How happy were we all! how cheery flew the peat-sparks! Tea was my nectar, yet I dreaded Katy's entrance with the tray and kettle. With every winding of her sister's tale would Marion's color vary; her eyes were bright or tearful as if her own fate hung upon the heroine's. It was this innocent abandonment of self, this credulity, this perpetual play of feeling and of feature, which gave Marion her exquisite grace; her voice was low and tremulous, her idiom playfully national, and a slight lisp imparted to her utterance the charm of infancy. Helen's tones were rich and musical; there was a spirituality in her countenance as indescribable as her sister's mutable expression; she was tall, and would have been commanding but for a bending half-retreating air, adding to gracefulness what it took from dignity. Marion was the soft and childlike daughter of Virginus—Helen was the Grecian daughter.

Our cousin had been gone a week, which seemed but one bright summer day, and we were seated, as I have described, around the fire: my aunt was busied with patchings in-

terminable, and Helen was spinning a legend of Cape Clear, a wild district lying near our glen. We thought ourselves secure from interruption, for tea was over, and in an agony of pleasure were pursuing the heart-rending adventures of a persecuted heroine, when Katy entered with what, in one of us at least, awakened more excitement than the story—a letter. —My uncle's only acknowledged correspondent was his agent, whose letters, "short and far between," had always to be sent for, to a post town some miles off. The period of remittance was still distant; therefore the letter could not be from him—so said my aunt—neither could it be from Mrs. Bullock, who never wrote but to her sister; nor was it likely that Quinilla should have broken through her prudent rule of saving postage, ink, and paper, by keeping her adventures for description, and writing only to announce her return.

"Who brought the letter Katy?"

"A horse an' man Ma'am."

"A horse and man!—where from?"

This Katy could not tell, attesting only that they went off again like thunder.

My aunt wiped her spectacles and looked with all her might at Katy, holding the letter unopened in her hand. Katy's wide eyes reciprocated the puzzled stare. Helen suggested the expediency of breaking the seal, adding, "I hope nothing unpleasant has happened to Quinilla."

"Or to her curricie dress and all her lovely clothes!" cried Katy, "wisha then make haste—ma'am, I'm all of a twitter, like a mouse's tail!"

My aunt turned the letter from side to side, as if determined to *guess* at its contents.

"Have you read it, Laura?" said my uncle quietly.

"Read it?—No Fitzgerald, 'tis for you: such an odd seal, with a cow in the middle and queer looking letters—Greek I suppose."

"They are German," said my uncle, taking the letter more hastily than I had ever seen him take any thing before.

"German!" ejaculated my aunt, clasping her hands—"is she coming at last?"

But my uncle was deep in the letter. Katy having picked up her mistress's thimble,

finding no off-hand excuse for remaining, withdrew. The letter was read and carefully placed in a pocket-book. My aunt looked impatient. My uncle wistfully gazed at the fire, as if he deciphered familiar countenances in the shapes the flames had chiselled.—He at length raised his eyes to a ponderous time-piece.

“The children had better go to bed,” said my aunt, quickly.

We received our usual benediction. I felt tears fall upon my cheek as my aunt embraced me. Not a word was exchanged when we parted on the landing—tears were, to us, such novel guests that we knew not what to make of them.

I went to sleep, and awoke with the same question—What *she* is coming?—It could not be Quinilla—Strange to say, this certainty did not console me. I could have welcomed her with open arms, rather than any one who had power and will, to make my poor aunt weep so bitterly. All my aunt’s kindnesses came forward to claim this conquest of my selfishness—we had never felt that we were

orphans—never had been driven by neglect or censure to bewail a parent's tenderness—we were never taunted with dependence, never told we were intruders—indulgence was not grudgingly doled out with the heart-depressing comment that it was unwise, that we were poor and should be taught privation—care was never awakened for the future, nor even thought. I had no conception that I was a useless animal—a dreamer, unfit for the active employments of life.

Of our immediate history we merely understood that our father had married twice—*unhappily*—that he had imbibed certain principles which led him to coalesce with a party inimical to the actual government; that he had died in prison, and that his property had been confiscated.—To me there was nothing dishonourable attached to the epithet *rebel*.—I knew little of laws or dynasties more modern than those of Sparta and Athens.—My father was a martyr to some act of fearless patriotism; an Aristides banished by an unjust ostracism, a Miltiades expiring in fetters. The political opinions deduced from my peculiar course of

study, associated glory and heroism with state treason, my thoughts seldom reverting to the circumstance, and never uniting with it stigma or disgrace.

I have no clue for resolving why the story of my parentage should this night obtrude itself so vividly, that I could not force my thoughts into a different channel; unless the solution might be discovered in a vague apprehension that the visitor so emphatically apostrophized was in some way connected with us. I felt disquieted at what had never awakened disquiet before. I recalled every sentence of my uncle's statement. I pondered the words—"Your father married twice—*unhappily*—How were these words to be interpreted?—was he unhappy in both marriages, or only because he had married a second time?—We were the children of the first wife; this had been ascertained by a question from Marion, put so directly that it could not be evaded, although the reply was evidently accorded with reluctance. My mother, then, was certainly dead. I felt a satisfaction at this assurance so singular, considering the cause, that I could only

trace it to the same indefinite terror of the coming guest, of claims superseding the rights of those who had fostered us.—There had been nothing to bear out this last conjecture but my poor aunt's unaccustomed emotion, and separation was the only disastrous event I could by any summing up of contingencies fix upon.

We met at breakfast, not with our usual cordial interchanges, but with half questions to which we seemed fearful of reply. Helen seemed as if her night had been as wakeful as mine; my uncle's countenance though calm, was full of thought—my aunt was peevish—I looked around the little parlour, hoping to discover something amiss in the customary arrangement which might justify her querulous remark that nothing went right that morning; but all wore its usual air of comfort. The window was open; straggling shoots of rose-trees and woodbine had forced their way into the room; the breakfast equipage was orderly, and drenched in sunshine; the massy silver tea-pot, gorgeously emblazoned with the crest of the O'Tooles, met and returned the rays; Pug dozed benignant in a warm beam, permitting

puss to share his regal mat without a grumble. The clock hand pointed to the stated minute for pouring out the tea. The butter, eggs, and cream, presented no excuse for fretfulness—My aunt at last discovered one in Marion's absence, though in that there was nothing novel, for Marion's attachment to an early ramble and Grace McQuillan's oat-cake had been too long understood and winked at, to give fair plea for reprehension. Besides, my aunt until this morning had never thought of finding fault with any of us.—Some master key was jarred, and the whole mental instrument sounded sharp and wiry.

Even this last subterfuge for crossness was defeated—Marion now entered, as she mostly did, laughing; and, never dreaming of displeasure, flew to embrace the lips just parted to rebuke her. My aunt's contracted brow relaxed: she looked kindly but sorrowfully at the lovely face peeping through curls which clustered in glossy rings around the forehead or fell beneath a large straw hat almost to the shoulders.—“There,” cried Marion, showering heaths of various hues upon the breakfast table,

‘I have found out an early bank and gathered every sprig—This purple darling Grace calls *Lady’s dimples*—this crimson *Lady’s tears*—this drooping, tremulous white, is *Helen*—This saucy-looking spikelet she has christened *Marion*—’tis pretty. All these are for my aunt, a parlour nosegay.—And here, she added, unfastening her cloak, in the hood of which another gathering was, lodged, “here is a fine provision for Helen’s weeny weavers!—reeds and bulrushes in plenty—puss shall have a mat—Granny’s hassock wants repair, and Katy wants a basket—these panicles will dye a lovely green (another trade for Helen’s little fry,)—and this, this is the very herb that Grace distils for Walter! Here is uncle’s portion, the poor man’s weather-glass; its eye is open; no rain to day. This London pride I’ve just entitled *Theodore O’Toole, Esquire*—But what ails you all?—Walter how grave you look: any letter from Quinilla?”

The word *letter* caused a momentary flush and pause—“I have filled your cup Marion,” said my aunt.

“But I breakfasted an hour ago at the

sheeling," cried Marion, "and heard the whole gossip of the glen; for Granny spun two lengths of yarn which might begird that famous city Walter read of; I can tell you all the news while you are breakfasting.—Kitty Reily's sweetheart is come back—Grace foretold as much. But Peggy's has deserted her—Grace warned her of that a month ago; the lad was sullen and had no *nature*. Our glen-boys are all home from the fair; Dennis the *blustorous* holding his head so high because it isn't broken—for that he may thank Granny; she prophesied a downfall if he came to fisticuffs, and admonished Dennis to shew his own brains by not braining his companions. Well, let me see—I had almost forgotten the strangest news of all—Blind Johnny found a purse of gold, so Granny's gossips told her, but our witch resolved to sift the business. Her conjuring glass informed her the blind man fibbed, or else the gossips, just for the sake of telling something wonderful:—the purse of gold has dwindled into two small pieces—a donation. And who do you think," she added, laughing so heartily as to force a pause, "who do you think

the donor is?—One of the painters who carried off Quinilla! one of these very men taxed by Slauveen with roguery!—I saw the gold with my own eyes: the poor man who bestows his earnings on the blind is certainly no rogue.”

“Have you finished, Rattle?” said Helen.

“Not half—but you have—Come—Granny predicts a broiling day; take my advice; let us go to the baby-house in the cool of morning, and leave the afternoon for reading.—Come, Walter, you look as if your head ached.—How serious you are all!—I rattled only to amuse you.”

“Go, Marion,” said my uncle—your aunt and I have matters to arrange—go children.”

We strolled towards the causeway. Marion tried to rally Helen, and sank herself into a fit of musing. There was no allusion to the letter: we seemed with one consent to avoid the subject, lest the bare mention should materialize our phantasms. Helen suddenly remembered her baby-house would not be tenant-ed until the afternoon—“Let us return then,” said Marion, “there are still some hours for our *dumb* companions.

We followed her through the empty breakfast room into the study: that also was unoccupied—Helen looked at my uncle's vacant chair and half retreated—We were so accustomed to be welcomed by his nod.

"Every one is in the dumps I think this morning," said Marion, forcing a laugh;—aunt would call it a *brown study*—come forward thou old chronicler," she added, drawing forth a volume. "I left my hero, the De Courcy, frightening a Frenchman by mere dint of looking grim. To your seats, to your seats;—we have already wasted more minutes in one day than aunt would in fifty!"

We obeyed, and were soon as silent as old night, oblivious of ourselves, turning over leaves like well arranged automata—Marion was the first to break the silence she had enjoined.

"Shall I read you this choronicle of the great De Courcy Helen?—'Tis a rare example of chivalrous valor and blunt sincerity.—But how spiritless you look!—some spell is on us all; I'll tell you what will break it; Grace holds a court to day; our piper Conlan is to be fined for getting drunk and making his poor old

grandmother dance to the tune of Morgan Rattler till she fell into a fit.—'Twas barbarous ! and our Brehon means to put on her black cowl and make him pay for it. The glen's-folk are all thronging to her *mote* to hear the sentence ; let us join them ; will you come Walter?"

I shook my head.

Marion looked over my shoulder.—“I am jealous of that Homer: we have wonderful bards of our own: read this; 'twill kill you with delight!” She put Ossian over Homer—“And now for a short cut,” she added, “to save intruding on aunt's ducks and chickens,” she flung the casement open, and drawing her sister after her, jumped from the low window ledge, enjoining me to compare the two blind minstrels and render justice as her Granny would.

CHAPTER VII.

Of Everallin were my thoughts..... She stood on a cloud before my sight, and spoke with feeble voice ! " Rise, Ossian, rise, and save my son."

Fingal.

I READ at first with thoughts pre-occupied : insensibly the wild measure of the Celtic Bard, the artful blending of the tender and the terrible, entranced me so completely, that voices in the adjoining room were unattended to, until the accent of distress called me from the Hall of Odin.

" It may be as you say, Fitzgerald—I hope it is—to lose them now would break my heart ; now, when we had made so sure of them.—

The Baron isn't dead I hope ; what brings her then ?—what business has she *philandering* to us all the way from Germany—The children don't want *her*, thank God !”

“ You forget who you are speaking of Laura,” said my uncle.

“ Well I suppose I do Fitzgerald : I am nothing to a Baroness I know, but I cannot forget that it was my love for these dear lambs that made you choose plain Miss O'Toole. Quinilla, you know, was always reckoned the beauty of the family ; but what is even she to Marion and Helen !—Tell me, Fitzgerald, in all your travels did you ever see such faces ?”

Of my uncle's reply I could only distinguish the word, “ mother !”

“ Well, poor thing,” rejoined my aunt, “ *her* beauty was no gain,”—Ah, that was a piteous fate ! but roses die as well as burdocks—what a fool she was to choose that wild Lord Gerald !”

“ I loved him, Laura,” said my uncle.

“ I know you did, Fitzgerald ; I know you did ; you couldn't well hate any one, not if they robbed and murdered you, much less your

brother. But I was only speaking of the children's beauty—Walter, to be sure, is not *very* handsome; not *very*; not quite so good looking as you—all trees are not oaks you know, Fitzgerald—but then he is so taking, so patient, poor sickly thing!—his smile goes to the heart!—How any one could desert the boy is a miracle! But some folk have neither souls nor consciences: fair husks hide often bitter kernels!—And then Helen—was ever mortal lovelier?—She has not, to be sure, the *finish* of Quinilla; no more has Marion—Quinilla has seen the world. But circumstanced as they are, 'tis better they should never see the world?"

"I think as you do Laura," said my uncle; "God grant they never mingle in its selfish tumult!—they are so simple in their wishes, so united!—We have enough to keep them, and to leave them; and when we die, Walter will be his sisters' guardian—Helen and he, I think, will never separate; but Marion—"

"Well, poor child," exclaimed my aunt, "'tis hard she should not marry, for I am happier with you Fitzgerald than I could be with

twenty brothers, if I had them.—Still I pray to God that she may live and die a Geraldine !”

“Amen ! responded my uncle ;—marry !—no—there is an awful interdict—the fiat of the Almighty !”

These words were uttered in a tone so deep and solemn that terror froze my tongue and glued me to my seat. I had listened unconsciously, without the least intention of becoming an eaves-dropper.

“How lucky it is,” resumed my aunt, “that Walter is so backward and so bookish ; had he been a dashing, fighting, hairbrained boy, he might turn out just such another scapegrace as his father, and break your heart a second time. Grace’s nostrums do him good ; he is not half so sickly as he used to be.”

“I have never repined at his infirmity,” said my uncle.

“Repined !” echoed my aunt, “repined because he is puny—I would not change him for a giant, Mr. Fitzgerald, nor the girls for all your goddesses —repined indeed !”

“Such affection, Laura, will find its merited reward.”

"I want no reward Fitzgerald," cried my aunt, half sobbing.—" 'Tis to please myself I love them—If my blessings are removed 'twill kill me;—'twill kill you, too, Mr. Fitzgerald, as quiet as you look."

"I have told you, Laura, that the object of this visit may be merely to *see* the children—a very natural desire—the letter avows no other, and the writer is above deception."

"Heaven grant it?" said my aunt.

"Yourself have looked to this visit for years, with wonder at its having been postponed Laura; the peace has made it practicable; Baron Wallenberg is in London with the Austrian Ambassador."

"True," replied my aunt, "it might be nothing worse than just a fly-blow; I think I have a knack for making myself miserable."

"Have you done as I requested?" said my uncle.

"To be sure I have; Slauveen was off at dawn, on Lanty Maw; Katy is scouring and dusting; I shall help her with a light hand now.—'Tis a lucky thing Quinilla isn't here, for where could we have put the Baroness?"

She brings no servant I suppose—You seem in a brown study Mr. Fitzgerald, did you hear me ?”

“ I was thinking of the children,” said my uncle ; “ what are we to say to them ?”

“ True enough ; what *are* we to say to them ! —the truth might kill them—if one died with fright, the others would die with grief, dear things !”

“ They love us, therefore they will ask no questions,” said my uncle ;—“ say, merely, ‘ you know as much as we can tell you without pain.’ ”

“ But will this Baroness be silent do you think, Fitzgerald ?”

“ We must refer the matter to her judgment,” said my uncle ; “ I dare not trust my own.”

“ I would trust to yours at any rate as soon as hers, Fitzgerald ; she shewed no brilliant head-piece when, against an earthly and a heavenly father’s interdict, she suffered Julia Derentsai to marry !—People call the ways of Providence inscrutable : in my mind they are dark only to those who shut their eyes.—We

have finger-posts enough to guide us, but we often break our heads against them."

During the greater part of this dialogue I was in a state of physical stupefaction. I tried to move, to hem, to make any, the slightest signal of proximity; but there I sat, paralysed, my eyes fastened on the self-same line, my ears trebly active. Even when silence was established I remained stooping over the book, torpid—insensibly my ideas became flickering and confused; consciousness faded into that kind of fantastic dreaminess which sometimes suspends the voluntary action of an exhausted mind. The entrance of my sisters and their anxious enquiries dispelled my trance.—I tried to laugh as I described my ghostly wanderings.

"This poem is too high-wrought for the nervous," observed Helen.—"You spent a sleepless night Waker; you slumbered as you read, and Ossian's spectral heroes haunted you."

"You are ill," said Marion, "I am sure you are."

"Only harassed by the death of Fillan,"

said Helen, pressing my forehead,—“or perhaps comparing, as you requested, the sightless bard of Ilion with Scotland’s *double-sighted* bard.”

While my sisters spoke I was trying to persuade myself that the startling dialogue I had overheard existed only in my trance ; but the effort was too painful ; my temples throbbed ; even the low sweet voices I loved so much distracted me. I sauntered to the headland and stretched myself beneath a tree. For the first time I experienced what it is to feel real uneasiness ; the disorder of my mind was aggravated by the superstitious horrors which the wild imagery of the Celtic bard had engendered ; the preternatural annihilated the probable, and reasonable deductions were upset by imaginings the most absurd. The gorgeous mythology of Homer, so far removed from human sympathies, amused without exciting me ; but the mythology of Ossian, so awful yet so familiar, found me in just the mood congenial to its powerful machinery—cloud-forms and moaning winds saluted me with mystic warning.—

And a voice at that moment *did* salute me,

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bunkers near the hob, her legs turned rowly
powly under her, puttin' one in mind of him
in Cork, we call the 'Billy-cut-short,' half man
 and half bowl-dish.—Don't look at her Master
 Walter, don't look at her; Lanty Maw could
 hardly stand it!"

"Lanty Maw," I repeated; "did she come
 on Lanty Maw?"

"Not a bit of her," returned Slauveen; "in
 a carriage an' four wheels! it rolled right back-
 wards down Knock na Kerran into murderin'
 glen. The screech she gave was the first hint
 we got she was alive—she's not so generous
 of her tongue as Miss O'Toole.—I took her
 for the livin' *moral* of a little wizen-lookin'
 wooden image in Ballygobbin chapel!"

"Ballygobbin chapel—was she there?"
 "No, no, she come by the ould pass; we
 spied her stuck against the carriage window,
 for a charm as we thought, St. Bridgid an'
 her head joined on with stickin' plaster. I
 crossed myself, an' pious Lanty whisked his
 tail to shew his duty to her Riverence. But
 the beauty o' the business is the skurry she
 put poor Katy in—a dumpy, grumpy, stiff-

and a face peeping not from the clouds but through the leafy trellis which surrounded me. So immersed was I in phantom-land, that the ghost of Crugal, with 'eyes like two decaying flames' and voice like the 'rushing blast,' could not have startled me more than the distended features of Slauveen, and the familiar sound of "Master Walter, Master Walter why, I've news for you; she's come! she's here! the little jontlewoman."

I started up.

"Stop awhile, stop awhile—don't scamper ding-dong to your own destruction—where's the use o' both of us being burned to cinders?—I'm only fit for Katy's tinder box!—Set your eyes upon her cap an' pinnars once, an'—haith! you're dishd—We're blind in love with her, ourself, already!"

I thought the fellow mad; he sat down, twisting up his legs in the strangest fashion, and dashed his hands across his eyes to disperse the drops of glee.

"There she squats," he cried, struggling between utterance and shrieks of laughter; "there she squats, just like this, upon her

bunkers near the hob, her legs turned rowly powly under her, puttin' one in mind of him in Cork, we call the 'Billy-cut-short,' half man and half bowl-dish.—Don't look at her Master Walter, don't look at her; Lanty Maw could hardly stand it!"

"Lanty Maw," I repeated; "did she come on Lanty Maw?"

"Not a bit of her," returned Slauveen; "in a carriage an' four wheels! it rolled right backwards down Knock na Kerran into murderin' glen. The screech she gave was the first hint we got she was alive—she's not so generous of her tongue as Miss O'Toole.—I took her for the livin' *moral* of a little wizen-lookin' wooden image in Ballygobbin chapel!"

"Ballygobbin chapel—was she there?"

"No, no, she come by the ould pass; we spied her stuck against the carriage window, for a charm as we thought, St. Bridgid an' her head joined on with stickin' plaster. I crossed myself, an' pious Lanty whisked his tail to shew his duty to her Riverence. But the beauty o' the business is the skurry she put poor Katy in—a dumpy, grumpy, stiff-

eyed, sour haggeen ! Husht ! here's the master —mum as a mouse !”

It is well observed that from the sublime to the ridiculous there is but a single step ; sometimes (as in the present case) a very short one. Ossian's cloud-formed Everallin, was at once transformed into the type of a little “ wizen looking” wooden image, St. Bridgid sitting on her hunkers, her head joined on with sticking plaster. The disenchantment was indeed ridiculous ; the strange and common-place were jostling to and fro in the thick haze which obscured my recollections.

My uncle's approach was slow and meditative ; he was too much pre-occupied to notice my embarrassment, or the singularity of my following him without enquiry when he announced the visit of a German lady, a friend of his, who wished to see me. My aunt stopped us in the little passage leading to the parlour, beseeching me to brush my hair and let my shoes be dusted, but my uncle had already opened the door, and I abruptly entered, prepared to meet, without much ceremony, the wizened likeness of St. Bridgid. A lady

turned towards us; I heard my uncle name Madame Wallenberg; I heard my aunt apologize for my disordered dress; what the lady said was lost; a swimming in my eyes, prevented my seeing any thing distinctly, but that the figure bending forward to embrace me was like nothing less, than like the wooden image of St. Bridgid.

I cannot tell how my sisters were received, or whether they shrunk back as sheepishly as I did. Their presentation however brought relief; notice was divided; a welcome hum of voices gave me courage to look up. I recovered from the shock sufficiently to direct a second but more reverential glance at Madame Wallenberg.—My sisters were gazing at her too—she was standing near the window and conversing with my uncle.

It was impossible to mistake the order she belonged to; you classed her at once with the high-bred, and the high-principled.—Her rich foreign dress, and the grandeur of her air, in which stateliness was carried as far as it could go without trenching upon haughtiness, were of themselves sufficient to dismay a rustic who

had been guilty of such indecorous approach and taught to expect a wizened hag.—I could have annihilated the knave who had beguiled me, and the longer I gazed the more my indignation boiled.

The Baroness was not tall indeed ; the tapering heels of her embroidered shoes did not give her even the height of Marion, but height could have bestowed no added dignity. The style of her countenance, the form of her head, her mien, her gestures were commanding ; the splendour and fashion of her dress harmonized with her demeanour ; she was enveloped in shawls of costly texture, and her head dress in form not unlike Grace McQuillan's *birred*,* suited the character of her singular physiognomy. It was a face more expressive than attractive ; it excited reverence rather than affection ; but for the snow white hair, which was arranged with scrupulous precision and filled the space between her cap and temples, I could not have determined she was old, for her clear, dark eyes had a searching bright-

* The ancient Irish conical cap—also Teutonic.

ness; her color, though broken, was brilliant, and her skin, if it wanted the smoothness and polish of youth, had not acquired those deep indelible furrows which are the usual companions of snowy tresses. She was much more erect than either of my sisters: if character can be inferred from countenance, you might have decided that her spirit was as inflexible as her form, and that she could neither bend from majesty nor rectitude. Her accent was so foreign, and her emphasis so peculiar, that although she spoke in English I scarcely understood her.

Our criterion for taste in dress and ornament had been Quinilla: she held the scale in which the nice distinctions of vulgar, dashing, stylish and genteel were delicately balanced; but the discrepancy between her attire and Madame Wallenberg's was so striking that I began to doubt my cousin's orthodoxy. These types of elegance were, each from the other, as far removed as is fine gold from tinfoil;—here were no bugles, plumes, and spangles; no yellow flounces tipped with purple scolloping;—the shawls and robe and queenly ruff were

of a fabric which the Bullock mantua maker's patterns never had exhibited—at least on Quinny's fragile form. The dress of Madame Wallenberg was so disposed that it seemed to me as if it grew upon the wearer; she symbolized the mother of the Gods, the *magna Mater*, a woman I could not for my life have ventured to dissent from, and whom I thought it quite impossible I should again venture to approach. Even while I made my furtive observations I was longing to slink off.

At her feet lay a rich travelling cloak, fit mantle for a Persian satrap, yet she tossed it aside, and trod on it as carelessly as I would tread on Dame McQuillan's rushes.—I thought upon the wrath of Miss O'Toole, and the memorable box she one day gave Slauveen for trampling on her tiffany capote.

At length our visitor, attracted by my uncle's observation of the scenery, turned to the window, and gave me the occasion I had panted for. I slid from chair to chair, and found myself outside the door, rejoicing. My first direction was the kitchen, and Slauveen was my mark—"How dare you," I began—

My rebuke, almost my breathing, was suspended, for, squatted on her hunkers near the hob, her legs turned rowly powly under her, with features rigid as the Ballygobbin image or any other graven type of womankind, was perched the living personation of Slauveen's alluring sketch, *Frau Berga*, or, as the glenboys learned to call her, the *Frowleen*, heirloom of the princely Wallenbergs, head 'tire-woman of the Baroness. The sketch was graphic, even to the cap and pinnars; the coif clung around the little antiquated face like the skull-piece of a warrior, while the pendent lappets rested on an enormous ruff gracefully diverging from the *Fräulein's* bosom to her chin; short silvery hair lay close and sleek upon her *matriarchal* forehead; her hands and arms (protected by furred mittens and a satin muff,) were crossed below her stomacher; the keenest scrutiny could not detect a spot upon her mouse-colored satin robe; the clothes, indeed, seemed part and parcel of the body, hewn out of the same block. But for the blinking of the eye-lids you could not have believed she was alive; even this motion was

so exact and uniform, it might fairly have been attributed to the pulling of a wire; there was no other symptom of the material being animated; no cough, no hem, no wavy undulation; the circumambient ruff by which pulsation might have been detected seemed unacted on; she looked like an image dislodged from a glass case.

The bustling spirit which animated Mrs. Mulligan was this day particularly restless, as if to heighten the effect of her strange visitor's inertia; scouring and dusting were carried on with might and main; half the kitchen was submerged, amphibious Katy floating in the dabblement, and never relaxing but to give her guest a stare, which would have frightened any animal but a German *Frau*. Not even when the uncivil suds threatened to pollute her petticoat did Berga swerve a tittle, neither did she wince at sight of the revolving brush; her hands remained stuck within her muff, her little bead-like eyes still fastened on a plate-rack, which stood against the wall directly opposite, her lips as if they were not made to separate. I was so astonished at the change-

less aspect, that maugre the dangerous wheelings of the scrub, I stood gazing at this mute excellence, this O'Tooke antithesis.

Katy's growling comments on my paragon, accompanying the music of her noisy symbol disconcerted me.—“Old Growdy—Hoddy-doddy—neither good nor gracious—dry and rusty, like last year's bacon!”—I grew nervous; it was possible the little *Frau* might hear, although she seemed to lack the other senses.—Slauveen too, drove the blood into my face; the kitchen casement was ajar; it looked into a bawn, which tenanted the pig, the cow, and Lanty Maw; our *Esquire* with a truss of hay was polishing his courser's hide, now looking wistfully at Lanty's back, now at the back of the little gentlewoman, and loudly publishing his quirks and commentaries—“Some are born, Lanty dear, with nothin' to bite, and some to bite the bridle—some are born to blow glass, and some to blow their brains out—I'm bound to comb you Lanty Maw, Pat Shine is bound to a comb-maker—and so we're all sent here for something

Lanty; but what's Madame Dumb-be-dead-alive sent hither for, we want to know?—*Hirrup*s Lanty! stand still *eroo*!—Did you ever see a scare-crow Lanty?—did you ever notice an ould brass Dutch girl that holds two lanky sixes in Madame Bullock's shop?"

To shut out these polite appeals to Lanty I shut the casement, and was preparing to obey Katy's energetic—"Good luck to you, an' get out of our way Master Walter; we have more quality folk already than we care to be acquainted with," when my aunt's pliant voice summoned Berga Schmidt to wait on Madame Wallenberg.

Roused, as I concluded, by the sound of her own name coupled with the Wallenberg, the little gentlewoman unrolled her legs and stood upon them, without assuming the least encrease of height in consequence; the feet began, soldier-like, to move, but not the eyes, whose direction she pursued as if forced by her conformation to keep the line of march. Slauveen, observant, threw the window open, and we all

stood gaping at her progress to the plate-rack.

"Left, right, left, right," exclaimed Slauveen, "quick march—a smart recruit—are plate-racks doors in foreign land I wonder?—Will you watch her then?—she'll break her head against the dishes!—Misthiss!" he roared as if to force a voice to her understanding—"who drilled you last?—right about face I say! don't you see the door *behind* you?"

The little gentlewoman paused at the plate-rack, looked as if she took it for a dromedary, and seemed determined to stand still, rather than diverge a foot.—"'Tis a tussle between um," cried Slauveen, "who'll move first—I'll back the plate-rack; will you back the little Corporal, Master Walter?"

Berga's lips began to more; they emitted the word *Thür*,* as difficult to me as to Slauveen and Mrs. Mulligan. I was hastening to her relief, having at last divined that she had mistaken the position of the door, (passed in her transit to the magnetic plate-rack,) but my

* Door.

gallantry was defeated by the entrance of Helen. She accosted the little foreigner with that truly Irish smile translateable by every one into "a hundred thousand welcomes," and taking the promptly extended hand of our noiseless acquaintance led her from the kitchen.

CHAPTER VIII.

“ To live in friendship is to have the same desires and the same antipathies.”

It may be inferred from the foregoing chapter that the peace, at least the social happiness of our *dulce domum*, was in more danger of being impinged by the new arrivals, than by the return of my cousin. True, Madame Wallenberg's embrace had been affectionate, nay maternal; but Quinilla had informed us that foreigners always salute with a kiss, and that Theodore O'Toole, Esquire, was one day nearly hugged to death in Piccadilly by two outlandish Counts, who took him for their friend Prince Husky Fusky.

I lingered in my chamber, dreading the dinner summons, arranging my apparel, forcing my intractable locks to assume the happy negligence of Sanford's, wishing for his careless step, his look of confidence.—At last the summons came; I shook from head to foot, made a desperate move, and found myself behind Helen, unconsciously responding to my uncle's grace. I was wedging myself between my sisters, and wondering which of us would venture to speak first.—

“Walter sit near me,—will you?”

I did not believe my ears, and stared at Madame Wallenberg.—The smile and beckon were conclusive; they were even more familiar than the address; I might have said more affectionate. In a minute I was seated near her, and fascinated into sociability;—from that hour I lost my terror of the Baroness.

Marion had been previously encouraged into freedom; her vivacious humour was in full career; even before dinner was removed the trial scene at Carrig-a-Phooka, was sketched. Grace with her holly wand and her portentous

head-gear, exalted on the mystic Liafail,* surrounded by her motley auditors ; the entrance of the prisoner ; the arraignment ; the indignation of the court upon Grace's statement of the outrage ; the effect which the sudden display of the palsied grandmother (managed by the drawing of a curtain) had on the delinquent ; his contrition ; the Eric† he was adjudged to pay ; videlicet, the earnings of his pipes at Kitty Reily's wedding for the use of the Shan-van-vogh,‡ and the promise, (bitterest test of all,) which he was compelled to make, never again to let our glen-boys '*welt the flure*' to the merry notes of *Morgan Rattler*.—"Conlan" added Marion, "bore all our Brehon's judgments very patiently but this banishment of Morgan Rattler ; he would rather part, he said, with '*Drops o' Brandy* !' 'twas like his brother, Morgan Rattler was, the darling tune that he grew up with. Our Gran-ny thinks of softening this part of the sentence.

Marion's countenance as she described this scene is now before me—mirth, archness, drol-

* Liafail, stone of fate. † A Fine. ‡ Poor old woman.

lery playing off her dimples. She never looked more unspeakably happy, more attractive, yet Madame Wallenberg's eyes were fixed on her with a serious, mournful, and, in as far as my side glance could determine, a pitying gaze.—Did others notice this unseasonable gravity?—I looked around; Helen was laughing at Marion's apt imitation of the piper Conlan; my aunt seemed in the clouds; my uncle was the only one besides myself who observed the singular expression of the Baroness. Marion, entirely regardless, had harnessed fancy's chariot, and was off to fairy-land, describing to our august visitor the attributes of each distinctive aeriform genus, the feats and pranks of of Red-caps, Green-caps, Pookas, Shefros.

Helen did not appear so much at ease; she, like me, had inferred from my aunt's disturbance, and the unguarded exclamation drawn forth by the letter, that this foreigner came to take us from the glen, or else to herald some such terrible event; she spoke little, looked at our visitor doubtfully, and bent her whole attention to assist our dear good aunt, as if she feared the influence of the regal looking

stranger, and was determined that no one should usurp the rights our first friends had to our regard. But not even these unqualified attentions could brighten up the hostess; she seemed entangled in some undivulgeable difficulty which kept back her usually prompt solicitude to recommend another slice of that 'lovely leg of pork,' or to insist upon your eating the side-bone of that 'beautiful young goose.'

My uncle treated his visitor with cordial respect, preserving an ease of manner which shewed him perfectly acquainted with the usages of that society to which the Baroness belonged. They were evidently old friends; they spoke of courts and circles in the which we had hitherto been ignorant my uncle had ever mixed. It was evident that Madame Wallenberg had not calculated on the isolated location of our *terra incognita*, and was also unaware of our limited establishment, small house, and simple style of living. She would every now and then deliver some perplexing order to Slauveen, or ask for some implement of which we had never heard the name; then laugh at

her own clumsiness, beg pardon with the most graceful good humour, and relate some pleasant anecdote of similiar mistakes ; shewing herself imbued with that rare politeness which makes your hearers satisfied with you and with themselves. Helen's face began to dress itself in smiles ; the painful redness which had spread even to my good aunt's ears gradually paled, and but for the grand dilemma which kept her blood in fever heat, she would have found herself, as she afterwards protested, as much at home with the high-bred Baroness as ever she had been with Mrs. Bullock. But this strait seemed unnavigable ; the more she pondered, the more she fidgetted. At last, without the least apology, she left the room ; I followed with my sisters, none of us dreaming that our conduct was uncourteous.

And now the mischief came to light—what was to be done with little Berga ?—There was *no ho* with Katy, my aunt said, ever since the unlooked for coming of the German waiting-maid ; it was all Fitzgerald's fault ; he might as well have mentioned in the note he sent off by Slauveen the straits they had been put to, to

accommodate the mistress; the Baroness's great fur cloak and carriage boxes filled up every spare inch of Quinny's room; there was no space left for stowage of a spider!—But for *her* a footman, too, had thrust himself into the cottage, a great strapping fellow with a fierce cocked-hat that stuck between the door posts.—“I sent him off with the carriage,” pursued my aunt;—“Fitzgerald has a curious notion of convenience to cram a coach-load into a cat's cradle; but what can be expected from a man who thinks his purse-strings pull as widely as his heart-strings? always in the moon with that Plato and his squad!”

I had no device to meet this untoward contingency—Marion suggested an appeal to Katy's generosity—*could* she refuse to share her bed with a poor stranger?

“Katy!” exclaimed my aunt,—“are you in earnest Marion!—Katy sleep with such a little show!—why she will hardly eat with her!—a thing, she says, that moves like an enchanted poker and can't say ‘*Slann the huth*’* in plain

* *Slann the huth*—thank you.

English!—Slauveen vows the German is not flesh—she sat this scorching day, without being scorched, two inches only from a fire that would roast our cow. They have made up their minds that she is enchanted: I think, myself, she was alive at the great frost.”

Helen observed that she might not have been accustomed to so cold an atmosphere, and quoted the Baroness’s shawls and furs.

“Well,” said my aunt, “that’s another pretty piece of business!—She can have no fire in her room, because there is no grate to put it in. But this Berga is the plague of plagues! we have no room at all for her, and if we had the room we have no bed.”

“But Grace has both,” said Helen—
“Berga shall have the stranger’s bed at Carriga-Phooka; our Granny’s heart will warm to this inoffensive little creature.”

“But do you think, Helen, this Baroness was ever dressed and undressed without a pair of hands besides her own? Katy has no time to wait upon her.”

“But I have,” replied Helen; “you know I often dress Quinilla. Marion, you shall

announce a visitor to Granny ; *I* will arrange the matter with the Baroness."

Marion was off like lightning, but my aunt demurred. Katy, to be sure, knew no more of German than did Grace McQuillan : indeed no one in the kitchen could make out what the stupid little animal meant, which was one reason they complained of her so bitterly ; they were worn out with bawling to her, and got nothing for their pains but a bewildered blare. Still the poor woman might be taken ill ; she might die up at the sheeling ; at the cottage there was always a resource in Madame Wallenberg.

While my aunt thus veered from *pro* to *con*, with me alone for auditor, Helen had frankly related to our guest the dire predicament, had submitted her own arrangement, and even before we entered, had established herself *dame d'atour* to Madame Wallenberg. The Baroness, indeed, seemed infinitely to enjoy the blunder she had made in bringing so much incompressible material, so many of substantial mould to fairy land ; and made so merry at her own expense that she forced my aunt into

a hearty laugh, and in a short time we grew into such intimacy, that on adjourning to the study we fell into our usual pursuits and places. Helen drew forth the ponderous work-basket, arranged aunt's creaking table, and every thing seemed tending to the point of comfort, for Madame Wallenberg, observing the cheery turf pile, (which Slauveen, with a leer at me, insinuated was longing to be kindled,) pleaded her chilly habits and proposed a fire. Thus did our visitor at once install herself a member of our little household, appearing as a well-beloved long absent friend returned from a distant country. She spoke indeed of Kings and Emperors with as much indifference as we would speak of Jock Mc Quillan, but arrogating nothing from the casualty which had placed her in such a glittering orbit. There was no revolting air of condescension, no would-be-gracious nod; none of that offensive affability I have since seen practised by the *little* great ones. She chatted with my aunt as friend with friend, enquired into our mode of life and our pursuits, bespoke a visit to the dairy and the byre, longed to

see the baby-house, looked into our books, rallied my uncle on his passion for the ancients, to which rare constancy she owed, she said, his passion for herself; then told a tale of his devotion at eighteen to some sexagenarian beauty of the Austrian court, which made us weep with laughter. Whenever her meaning was obscure, my aunt would bluntly question her, for the Baroness spoke English with the German idiom, and though her compound words were beautiful, they were perplexing.

Of herself, her home and country, she conversed with frankness; of her castle on the Elbe and her palace at Vienna. There seemed no concealment; all was candid and unstudied, yet I could not help revolving the singularity of such a woman making such a journey to visit simple cottagers. Her son, we learned, was married to a German Princess. She was graciously satisfying my aunt's queries about her forest grounds and feudal castle, when Marion entered, unceremoniously presenting Grace McQuillan.

Grace's admiration of the *rare old gentry* was inherent; her dip to Madame Wallenberg

was reverential. The lower Irish have a peculiar tact for welding the *free and easy* with profound respect, amalgamating as expertly the current ore of compliment with the more sterling coin of genuine good-will. Our Granny, quite decorously, but nothing daunted, advanced within a step or two of Madame Wallenberg, then came to a full stop with "save your honor kindly, and a lucky journey to your baronship," dropped a second lowly dip, and, while the parting sun-beam lighted up her yellow *birred*, discreetly prefaced her hospitable errand.—The trouble was neither here nor there; she should be proud of such good company; Miss Marion had informed her what a decent, tidy, sober, little body the honorable lady's waiting-lady was; at first they might be something strange with one another, by reason that their tongues were strange, but she had learned a way of talking without words, and was very quick, besides, in reading people's looks. She had come herself, as it behoved her, to fetch good Mrs. Berga, to help her through the pass, and promise her a hearty welcome. Without waiting

for a reply which might have included undesired acknowledgments, Grace turned her back upon the Baroness; but her exit was cut off; for Berga entered, ushered by Helen.

The German and the Irishwoman stood awhile in mutual admiration, each making the other a curtesy profound. There were certain points of resemblance between these embryo friends which predicted union, traits of the *path-keeping* character, (softened in Grace McQuillan by benevolence,) with the more discernible analogies of punctilious neatness and propriety. The Baroness explained to her stoical attendant the reason which compelled their separation for the present. The *Fräulein* looked pathetically at her mistress, hesitated, and glanced into the background, where lurked Katy, anxious to learn the wind-up, and flourishing the petrific broom. Berga seemed leisurely to contrast the smoke-dried countenance, straggling hair, soiled cap, and unpropitious scowl of Mrs. Mulligan, with Grace McQuillan's clean, healthful aspect and inviting smile. The comparison decided her; she approached the Queen of Carrig-a-Phooka

with stately port and gait deliberative, took the offered arm, and leaned upon it with an air of quiet confidence. Grace gave the little hand a friendly squeeze, and, turning to my aunt, begged the loan of Lanty Maw, observing—belike the weeny body had already walked her day's allowance.

We crowded around the window to witness the set out. Berga, hooded carefully and swathed in furs, clasping her new friend, whom she looked up to with infantine reliance, was pillioned behind Grace, who held the bridle with a practised hand, haranguing Lanty Maw in Irish, profuse of coaxing epithets, and praising his angelic temper. Lanty demurely listened, and shewed the magical effect of flattery, by placidly submitting to the double load. The glen-boys highest in our Granny's estimation were honored with Madam Berga's multiform boxes; one ragged posse, assuming the office of pioneer, was already in advance to clear away obstructions; another, in the rear, was armed with switch and cudgel to quicken Lanty's motion. Katy and Slauveen, grown *wonderful polite*, tucked in the *Fräulein's* petti-

coats exhorting the escort to leave off their obstreperous shouts, and not scare the *sinses* of the little Palatine.*

"Mind boys," cried Mrs. Mulligan, "she's not our countryman; she knows nothin' of our manners."

Arrangements being now completed, the cavalcade sat off, our gallo-glasses, as they were wont, making the welkin ring with "hurroo for the Geraldine!"

This little interlude cleared away the trifling remnant of reserve which hung between us and our guest, who begged to be thoroughly initiated into our aboriginal cheers and compliments, and made Marion promise to conduct her to the eyrie of our fairy Queen.

The evening I had looked forward to with such foreboding, passed away as rapidly as when Helen would cheat time of half its hours. Had Madame Wallenberg departed the next day, I should have inferred that her stateliness was merely a physical feature of the German

* The German settlers were called by the Munster boys, Palatines.

type with which the mind had no alliance. This opinion for many weeks prevailed; there was no apparent effort in the readiness with which she passed from the splendour of courtly life to the simple tenor of a rude, unsophisticated existence; there was no ostentatious hint that she felt perfectly at home; no look of ill-disguised discontent, no contemptuous sneer detected through a flimsy covering; nothing to remind her humble hostess of the colossal eminence which raised Madame Wallenberg above blunt, unlettered Dame Fitzgerald. Had the barbarous modes described by Tacitus still obtained in Germany, Madame Wallenberg could not have shewn less astonishment at our uncultured manners, or less distaste for our homely dwelling and our simple aliment. Hers was that pure good taste which loves to elevate the humble-minded. To this generous feeling I attributed her attentions to myself; she was partial to us all, but I was particularly noticed, for she saw me suffering under a painful sense of inferiority, lame, feeble, awkward, and utterly unconscious of my most besetting evil—indolence. Had it not

been for this last despotic malady, I might have profited equally with Helen by our new friend's conversation, but this indolence, co-operating with prejudiced opinions of the value of my early course of reading, kept me from the track of useful knowledge. Marion was almost as averse as I was, to change the nature of her themes; she would watch her opportunity, and break upon the more solid trains of enquiry, pursued by Helen, with some arch comment which would betray us to the world of spirits. It was impossible to resist her caressing tone; the fairy host of Germany was summoned from its rocks and caves and woodland haunts to please her; Elves of the Brockenberg were called forth to test their necromantic feats with Irish elves—our Cluricaune attacked the Saxon Kobold, and beat it out and out; the phantomhunter on his spectre-steed was distanced in an eye-wink by Padreen Carty on the Pooka; while Number-nip and all his imps fled at the touch of our Fir-Darrig.

After our first evening's introductory conversation I noticed that Madame Wallenberg

seldom gave us glimpses of the high and palmy state she moved in—never but when directly questioned. Even her instructions tended to strengthen our attachment to humble life; there was no effort made to divert us from the path of social happiness hitherto pursued, or to impart those accomplishments which we knew Madame Wallenberg possessed, and which might have been thought necessary to my sisters had they been destined for a higher sphere. Helen owed her attainment of the German language more to her own love of study than to the incitement of our visitor. The Baroness, indeed, assisted her progress, but when she conversed with my sister in her native tongue, it appeared rather for her own relaxation than for Helen's improvement.

Thus were our fears of removal completely set at rest; my aunt now looked upon her guest with that substantial good-will which evidences welcome without a single draw-back. Even Katy's and Slauveen's disgust began to slacken; they regarded the interlopers with something bordering on civility; nay Mrs. Mulligan was heard to remark that the Baron-

ess put her in mind of a sweet young Countess Cassandra Von-Bubber she lived with once—a sort of Dutch-Irish-woman, who would stretch out her portly fist to any beggar, by *raison* she never doubted the blood that flowed in it.—“None of your upstart *musheroons* wrung out of industry,” pursued Katy, “who turn up their noses at dunghills because their *stock* was *gothcred* there!”

Quinilla had often assured us that we should be *non-entities* in tip-top company; downright ignoramuses. She would give us gratuitous lectures on etiquette, which were more difficult to comprehend than the Ogum characters engraven on the Liafail of Carrig-a-Phooka; I used to ponder on this occult jargon until the thinking principle would begin to fail.

But in the style of Madame Wallenberg there was no ambiguity, no break-neck spring at the sublime; her words were as freely chosen as our own, as simple, and as intelligible to the simple; nay her compound *ds* soon became familiar—Yet she was certainly *tip-top*; therefore we concluded, that to be unsusceptible of Quinilla's far-fetches might not prove us so

utterly vulgarian as our cousin represented us. In our discussion on this matter Marion observed there might be two tip-tops, the one impenetrable, the other penetrable; and thus we finally arranged it, with one accord preferring the plain-spoken fashionist to the incomprehensible.

CHAPTER IX.

Nor spring nor summer's beauty hath such grace
As I have seen in one autumnal face.

Donne.

THE memoir of a happy life is seldom interesting; even our happy days, however we ourselves may love to prate of them, are, in description, vapid; the listener yawns and longs for some enlivening mischief, some dark vicissitude, to harrow up the soul or fill it with delicious anguish. This craving for the excitable in narrative is predominant in myself; when in Helen's melo-

dramas the course of true love would 'run smooth,' Marion and I were listless auditors ; when her model was so perfect that not even a heel was vulnerable, when her creations were like beings far above the moon, unsusceptible of the coarser feelings and incapable of mortal error, so were they also, by their faultless essence, shut out from mortal sympathies. To these angelic natures we preferred the *human* nature which kept us in a fever ; and, to the optimism which shadowed forth infallibility, we preferred the interesting ups and downs, and blots and brightnesses of erring fleshly creatures.—Were I to depict the brilliant features only, of those characters with which my destiny allied me, and to dole out a prosy repetition of every day occurrences, trite echoes of each other, my story might fare no better than did my countryman O'Rourke when he soared into the lunar region : therefore I pass over the summer days succeeding Madame Wallenberg's arrival, and enter on the autumn, precursor of fog, and tempest, tooth-ache and Quinilla.—As yet there was no herald more direct of her approach.

It had been hinted by my aunt to Madame Wallenberg, that there was such a person as Miss O'Toole, a partner in our household, and expected to resume her place before the winter ; but the Baroness had the oddest habit of forgetting what she considered *nothings*, though heaven knows the forewarned reunion was a deprecated *something* to one of us at least ; I secretly rejoiced at our guest's oblivious habit, hoping that our cousin might be driven into favoring Mrs. Bullock with a super-added month.

But my poor aunt's ear-tips again grew scarlet at what she called 'the second part of the same tune,' for where was Quinny to be lodged ?—Courtesy to her respected visitor forbade a repetition of the hint ; my uncle could as soon cease to be, as be inhospitable ; and we, the younger aids she had recourse to, were so doleful at the prospect of exchanging the Baroness for the O'Toole, that the subject was put off from day to day, and at last deferred until a letter from Quinilla should make some arrangement peremptory.—What a panic seized us whenever Slauveen or Katy broke on us

abruptly ! the very mention of a letter drove the blood into my head !

At length the Baroness herself began to speak of separation, although indefinitely. Grief made us silent ; my uncle hemmed, and began laboriously to stroke Quinilla's pug ; my aunt made the strangest cackle, between a laugh and whimper ; she confessed to us, in private, that had it not been for poor, forgotten Quinny she should have cried in earnest—"But children," added she, "you may perceive with half an eye, that two fine ladies could never hit off in such close quarters as this cottage. Madame Wallenberg and our Quinilla have different notions of gentility—there is something more of *dash* about Quinilla."

Whether her intimation of departure had been accidental, or that, perceiving our dejection, she had determined on a longer stay in Ireland, our visitor's intention seemed abandoned, and, but for her long conferences with my uncle, which we feared preluded a leave-taking, we might have thought it given up. My aunt, meanwhile, again hung upon the hooks of dire uncertainty, wondering equally

at Madame Wallenberg's and at Quinilla's silence; sometimes surmising that Mrs. Bullock might wish to shew off her sister at the winter *drums*, sometimes that Baron Wallenberg might not be quite so fond of *his* wife's company as *her* Fitzgerald was.

One morning that my uncle and the Baroness had quitted the breakfast-room before us, my aunt energetically set forth her reasons for this latter surmise.—“I never left Fitzgerald since I married him but once, and that was *willy nilly*, it seemed a hundred thousand years till I got back to him again!—But people in high life are taught to keep their hearts like clocks, always ticking the same measure.—Ah children! these great ones never feel the transport of a glad shake hand! a throbbing welcome!”

“I would not live with them to be their Queen,” said Marion, “although I dote on Madame Wallenberg—to be condemned to carry such loads of useless things—ruffs, trains, ruffles, stomachers, et ceteras, interminable!—Quinilla must suffer twice as much as the Baroness, for she wears twice the quantity.”

"Well," said my aunt, "a young woman has more excuses than an old one, Marion: the Baroness is old enough to be Quinilla's mother, and yet her stomacher-pin would purchase all the clothes poor Quinny ever put upon her back. Certainly the Baroness can count my sister's farthings with pounds sterling, and may likewise lay some stress upon her rank, though as to ancient blood not all the Barons ever born could go beyond the first O'Toole."

"Does ancient blood give elegance of manner, aunt?" said Marion.

"Not quite a finish," said my aunt; "one must see the world, like Quinilla, to be up to style."

"And yet," said Marion, "our cousin is as unlike the Baroness as Katy is—still Madame Wallenberg has seen much more of the world than Quinilla has."

"You should remember Marion," said my aunt, "that German and Irish manners may differ very widely. I have often heard my father say, (and he was versed in heraldry and ancient history,) that those German tribes

were Goths or Vandals, I don't remember which, but they were savages of some sort and *very* modern; the Irish, on the contrary, came from the plains of Shinar, a place as ancient as the Tower of Babel, and were polished by Jews and Gentiles, Spaniards and Egyptians, as they came along. My father learned all this from books with names as hard as bullets, some of them written by a woman, too, one *Polly-Chronicon*."

Marion, to whom the chronicles of Ireland were as familiar as her name, looked at me with eyes significant of laughter.—Helen changed the conversation by asking whether Madame Wallenberg had other children than the son she spoke of.—The silence which succeeded this enquiry made me look towards my aunt; she was staring at Helen as intensely as if she had been called on to expound the Sphinx's riddle. At first I thought that she was ideally immersed in culinary arrangement, speculating upon the tenderness of an unconscious turkey about to be surrendered to the relentless gripe of Mrs. Mulligan, or settling whether the *bonnaveens* that very morning

introduced into the world should figure on the board as *debutanti* or old stagers, as roasted pig or bacon. Marion took up Helen's question.

"Is that Baron Wallenberg, who married the Princess, an only child, I wonder?"

"Wallenberg!" echoed my aunt; "there is no Baron Wallenberg but the old Baren—the son is Baron Derentsai."

"The German nobles then have various titles in one family, like the Irish nobles," observed Marion; "the Geraldines in olden time were Kildares, Desmonds, Ophalys, and so forth; but aunt, has Madame Wallenberg—"

"And there was the Deacon of St. David's, Gerald Barry," said my aunt; "a Welchman by his mother, a tutor to King John, and a great liar, people tell me, though he was a priest."

"But is this Baron Derentsai an only—"

"And there was Shamus Desmond, the *sougann* Earl," said my aunt; "he died in London tower as high as if he had been hanged. His lady, (the enchanted Countess,)

cut her teeth three times, and had two heads of hair; she was a Geraldine herself upon the father's side, one Maurice of Clangibbon, a white Knight—"

"But is this Baron—"

"And there was silken Thomas," went on my aunt, whose brain all of a sudden seemed pregnant with historic fragments and eager for delivery;—"he was a rank rebel, and murdered an archbishop."

The more my aunt evaded, the more did Marion's curiosity incite her to persevere—"But is this Baron Derentsi an only child?"

"Neither was Derentsi a title of the Wallenbergs," said my provoking aunt; "the Baroness's brother was Baron Derentsi; her eldest son upon the uncle's death came in for title and estate."

"The uncle had no children then," said Helen.

"He had no son," was the reply.

"Had he daughters aunt?" enquired Marion.

"He had *one*; Katy is waiting for directions; I must go."

"Katy is busy with her little porkers," exclaimed Marion, looking from the window ; "I wonder Baron Derentsi did not leave his fortune to his daughter."

"She !—she was destined to a convent Marion."

"Poor thing !—I don't like convents ; Grace says that they are prisons with another name ; my heart shivers when I think of being shut out from this beautiful world ; I would rather be a bird, or even a branch of heath !—And so this poor—what was her name, aunt?"

"Her name?—Julia Derentsi."

I started.

"And so they shut her in a convent, aunt?"

"They *should* have done so child, but the Baroness against her brother's dying wish and will, adopted Julia and brought her up at Wallenberg."

"Then they did *not* make a nun of her—How glad I am ! May be she was married to her cousin."

"Baron Derentsi married the Princess Ehrenstein."

"But you said he was an elder son," observed Helen; therefore, aunt, we must infer there was another."

"There *was* another, Helen, Count Ernest."

"*Was*," repeated Marion,—“is he dead? did he die of love?—did he die lately?—the Baroness does not seem to mourn any one.”

"’Tis many a day since he was killed poor man," sighed forth my aunt.

"Killed! he was a soldier then: make haste and tell it all aunt, there’s a darling—Helen will make this German story into a nice romance."

"A nice romance!" exclaimed my aunt; "a nice romance!—God help you child!"

Marion was too much excited to remark the melancholy tone in which these words were uttered. I was on the rack.

"And so the second son was killed in battle," said Marion coaxingly; "you’ll tell me won’t you aunt?"

"In battle!—no—but in a duel."

"And now I guess it all," said Marion; "Don’t say another word.—The young man loved his cousin Julia, who was very beautiful, as is every

heroine ; some more favored cavalier stepped in, stole Julia's heart, and ran away with her."

The blank look of puzzlement and wonderment which my aunt fixed upon the speaker upset our gravity. We laughed.—"God help you children !" she exclaimed at length, "God help you !" —She rose to leave the room.

"Stop aunt, one moment ; you have not heard my sequel yet," said Marion ; "this cavalier who ran away with Julia, was challenged by Count Ernest, and—oh ! how I pity the poor Baroness !—her son was killed !"

There was an instantaneous change in Marion's tone and countenance ; she seemed suddenly to have recollected our visitor's connexion with the sorrowful catastrophe whose cause she had so lightly surmised ; and looking at my aunt with a penitent expression, mingled with a lurking curiosity, she asked whether she had, indeed, read aright the whole of the romance. My aunt's emphatic "no" was bluntly spoken ; it said quite plainly—"your questions are importunate ;"—still Marion would not be discouraged—"But the young Count must have been killed by somebody you know aunt."

"I know! who told you that I knew him?"

"Nay, now you have confessed what I never intended to imply," said Marion: "come aunt, you wo'n't refuse us will you?—Just look at Walter; how his eyes are fixed on you! Tell us something of the Knight who slew the Baron's son and married Julia Derentsi, won't you aunt?—was he handsome?—did he make her a good husband?"

"A good husband!—he!"

"Yes, as good a husband as our uncle makes his own dear wife."

"As good a husband as *my* Fitzgerald!" cried my aunt indignantly—"A man who took another wife before poor Julia went to heaven?"

"Another wife!" said Marion; "what a wretch!"

"Not half so bad though as the woman was that married him—'tis a way the women have in Germany.—There's not a husband in ten thousand to be named with *my* Fitzgerald, Marion."

"But I never thought that any man, now a days, was suffered to take more wives than one," said Marion.

"The Turks have shoals," replied my aunt; "don't you remember the story Helen told us of the Turk who burned his wives for fear a christian spark should catch them?—This case, however, was not quite so bad, not polygamy entirely—the second wife was lawful I believe, for the Pope, or some one, had granted a divorce."

"How very wicked of the Pope," said Marion.

"But aunt you have named all the actors of this story except Julia's husband; was he a German Baron too?" said Helen.

"What a fool I am to waste my morning in this manner!" said my aunt, abruptly rising—"No orders yet for dinner!—To think of my prating a whole hour of what concerns none of us at any rate."

She stammered and reddened at the last words as if her conscientiousness were wounded: with her hand upon the door-handle she turned round and begged we would never say another word upon the subject—"Tis nothing to us you know," she added, coloring still deeper, "whether the man was Turk or christian; but Fitzgerald would be wild if he thought

I told you any thing which you might blab before the Baroness—a hint of the affair would be her death, may be, as easy as she looks. Above all, children, for mercy's sake, never drop a word of Margaret Wallenberg.

"Margaret Wallenberg," we all exclaimed, "who is Margaret Wallenberg?"

"The Baroness' daughter to be sure—how stupid you must be!—Didn't I tell you she was the second wife of—of—of that unlucky scape-goat, or did I tell you?—my head is so distracted I don't know what I'm saying—the second wife of that wild—German Baron—did you say German, Helen?—to be sure—German root and branch.—Let me go Marion; the longer I live the more I see the mischief talking makes."

She left the room, but returned to conjure us to be prudent.—"The Baroness, children, is not so comfortable as she pretends;—mention her daughter and there's an end of her philosophy."

"How horrid!" exclaimed Marion, when my aunt had closed the door; "'tis ten times worse than I expected. This unknown knight

of a certainty married the two cousins—so much is clear at all events—and broke their hearts, may be! I wish I had not teased poor aunt; she looked quite flurried.—You think as I do, don't you, Helen?"

"That my aunt looked flurried?"

"No, no; that this nameless Cavalier was as reckless of his ladies' lives as that hot Saracen who blew up all his wives to baffle the Crusaders. The legend struck my aunt you see.—What are you thinking of, Helen?"

"Of Madame Wallenberg;—how nobly she bears up against such trials!"

"My aunt says these events took place years ago," cried Marion.

"Time might have softened her sorrow for her son and niece, but the remembrance of her daughter's error, Marion!"

"Perhaps the error was repented of."

"I might have given it a more serious name," said Helen.

"But may there not be something to extenuate?" asked Marion.

"Could you marry the murderer of Walter,

and the husband of another, Marion; that other your nursery companion?"

"The murderer of Walter!" exclaimed Marion, looking at me with eyes brimful of terror—"the murderer of Walter!—I would sooner die!—You place this Margaret's error in a stronger light;—true! these wives were cousins, and might have been such own familiar friends as you and I are, Helen."

"The chivalrous name of duel dazzled you," said Helen;—"you thought of tournaments, and ladies emulous in favoring the conqueror. I remember Madame Wallenberg one day remarking that the duel was a fatal relic of a barbarous age, a custom by which brute passion and revenge were fostered."

"But what is one to do if one's insulted?" argued Marion. "If Fin MacComhal had refused to fight the son of Starno, would not his foes have branded him a coward?—I confess I do admire this ancient mode of terminating quarrels; it puts the puny stripling on a par with the rough braggart. Moreover Helen you should make allowance for a fiery temper; when Quinilla sneers at you, you are

unmoved as little Berga, while I—I have sometimes wished that we were men and thus could fight our quarrel out genteelly: yet you are twice as brave as I am—witness the day that Walter slipped from the Banshee's cliff, and clung to the old tree; the branch was giving way! you ventured boldly to the brink and caught his hand and drew him up; *my* limbs were frozen—I could not even cry for help! I died a thousand deaths—I never shall forget it."

"Not so easily, at least, as you forget your argument," said Helen.

"Thought is a nimble charioteer," cried Marion—"I am again in Germany. Suppose this young Count Ernest were stormy and insulting, and the nameless Knight who slew him, however peaceful, a gallant cavalier—he dared not brook the outrage; his courage would be questioned."

"But do you count as nothing the moral courage which prefers to suffer censure rather than deserve it."

"They may preach forbearance who never felt a cuff," said Marion. "People cannot

always keep their tempers—I am vexed enough when I return Quinilla's taunts ; my penitence however is dull and indolent, while my tingling spleen is ever active. Now if this nameless Knight received a blow, 'tis probable his brute courage, as you call it, started up, his sword was drawn, and Ernest dead, before his moral courage could come forward."

"He could not have fought his battle better than you have done," said Helen laughing.—"Walter are you listening"—can you divine why Marion is so earnest in this mysterious Baron's cause ?"

"Because it is mysterious," I replied.

"A marvel !" exclaimed Marion, looking at me fixedly ;—"Walter without a book !—were you unravelling what puzzles *me* most in the replies which aunt so grudgingly accorded ? I asked if they had shut up Julia in a convent, as her father had decreed ;—her answer was, 'they *should* have done so.' Why *should* I wonder ?"

"The very question I would have proposed," said Helen, "but you prevented me, and my

aunt looked so distressed I dared not put it afterwards.—Can *you* guess, Walter ?”

“Because it was her father’s will,” I answered.

“But fathers are perverse at times,” said Marion ; “nay are cruel ; witness that parent in the Galway legend who condemned his son.”

“Brutus condemned both his,” I added.

“These were offenders,” observed Helen : “even as such their punishers were harsh ; but what could Julia Derentsi have done to merit such a destiny ?—We may conclude that at her father’s death she was a child, for aunt said the Baroness adopted her, and brought her up at Wallenberg ; yet this generous adoption seemed censured rather than commended.”

“And my aunt is so good-natured, too, which makes the matter more perplexing,” added Marion. “If *my* father had bequeathed *us* to a convent, I am very sure aunt would have acted just like Madame Wallenberg.”

“Unless there was some serious reason to prevent her interference,” I remarked.

“We had better think no more about it,” said Helen ; “the matter must remain a riddle,

for none of us will venture to renew a theme which makes aunt uncomfortable."

"It has already clipped an hour of our morning" observed Marion; "this discussion has cost me twenty pages of the Fairy Queen; I left Sir Guyon in a rare dilemma!—Helen, your hour is almost come; shall I help you to put the baby-house in order before I visit Grace. Berga's talent for ourGranny's chirolology is amazing; she no longer wants you for interpreter; Grace and she are as familiar in their parts of speech as you and Madame Wallenberg—Walter, where are you? on Mount Ida?—come."

"He looks as if he wished us to say, 'stay,' " cried Helen.

"Well, he shall stay if he prefer it, and he shall solve the German puzzle for us. Go into the study Walter; write down every syllable;—who knows what we may make of it!"

CHAPTER X.

Oh! Reader, had you in your mind
Such stores as silent thought can bring—
Oh! gentle Reader, you would find
A tale in every thing!

Wordsworth.

My sister little thought that an order given in mere sport was obeyed upon the instant. Not only was the recent conversation faithfully recorded, but also that ambiguous one I had overheard upon the day of Madame Wallenberg's arrival. This last had occupied my reveries for many weeks; it was a tangled skein: I had viewed it and reviewed it at every

point; thought I had discovered various clues; and finished by embroiling it worse than ever. I was too indolent to begin a new unravelment, particularly as nothing had occurred to stimulate exertion. Madame Wallenberg's demeanour was so cheerful, and so free from ambiguity, that I had begun to think the mystery I had vainly grappled with might exist only in my brain; it was fading into something too remote to terrify, or too perplexed to be discovered. But no sooner had I, (following Marion's whimsical suggestion,) written down every syllable, than my inference was formed.—The nameless cavalier was my own father, and Julia Derentsi was my mother.—This solution at once explained the nature of our connection with Madame Wallenberg, the motives of her visit, and the singular interest she evinced for us. Every word of my aunt's reluctantly imparted information, when compared with the dialogue I had so unintentionally listened to, corroborated this conjecture. I had gathered from my uncle's conversations with the Baroness that he had been introduced at Wallenberg while travelling through Ger-

many:—it was easy to infer that my father had accompanied him, and that in this manner the acquaintance had commenced which terminated so fatally. The very epithet my aunt applied to her husband's brother and the nameless cavalier established their identity, and scarcely needed the aid of the emphatic "*my Fitzgerald*," so triumphantly distinguishing my uncle from the "unlucky scape-goat." Here also was the solution of "your father married twice—unhappily." The first union had ended in divorce; the second, (its unfavorable auspices considered,) could not have been fortunate.

We had been told that my father was of noble birth; therefore his dispute with Count Ernest could not have been occasioned by disparity of rank with either of the high-born females he had espoused. We were cut off by this duel, or by some as unpardonable offence from my mother's family. The Baroness alone, seemed to have recollected the children of her luckless niece, and, regardless of our father's errors, to have sought us out. To the same noble spirit I imputed her steady friend-

ship for my uncle—he merited her esteem, and he preserved it, notwithstanding his consanguinity to the man in whom originated those domestic troubles which my aunt so artlessly lamented.

Thus far I argued from grounds as I conceived authentic; but beyond this all was dim, and the more I tried to pierce the maze, the darker it became.—Why was my mother so early doomed to celibacy?—What was the awful interdict my uncle spoke of?—I pondered the words, “circumstanced as they are it is better they should never see the world.” We had no inclination for the world thus emphatically prohibited; but if we had, it seemed the sentence could not be reversed which shut us from it.—Perhaps this decree originated in my mother’s divorce?—But she had been from her birth, as it would seem, devoted to more strict seclusion than ourselves.—Thus the interdict, evidently, had sprung from some evil more remote.

My aunt it was clear had at first suspected Madame Wallenberg of a design to take us from the glen, but to all appearance our visitor

had perfectly concurred in the decision which fixed us there for life. This enigma, then, remained as much involved as Margaret Wallenberg's fate. The Baroness never had let fall the slightest hint by which we could have guessed she had a daughter, neither could we possibly have surmised that she had been so deep a sufferer. The even flow of her bland gaiety appeared unruffled by regrets—did this imply insensibility or firmness?—She was by many years my uncle's senior, yet Marion herself was not more arch and humorous; she bantered without sarcasm, and rallied without spleen; looking as if her autumn were still gilded by the brightness of her spring and summer. Yet she had lost two children, the one cut off untimely, the other—My glimpses of the other shewed me a fate more to be deplored; a moral obliquity that might have humbled the gray head still so firm and lofty.

I longed to confide in Helen, but rectitude forbade me to divulge what accident alone had revealed to me, and what was rendered sacred by the wishes of my adopted parents. Another motive for concealment now presented itself—

my sister's peace might be disturbed; that world at present so lightly given up, with a gay commentary on its irksome and absurd restraints, might be regretted were the barrier revealed which would convert choice into necessity. Helen's heart was pure and sensitive, reverent of truth and heroic virtue; these high qualities were always embodied in her legendary fictions, enlivened by occasional touches of comic humour; her flights into the sphere of awe and terror were digressions to please Marion; but I could perceive that the region of the *natural* was more congenial to her sentiments than the ether of romance; therefore mysteries and perplexities in which Marion's aerial fancy would float untired, might, if involving those she loved, become to Helen oppressive and tormenting.

Besides those passages already noticed there were other *impenetrables* in my memoranda, particularly in the lines which recorded the indignation of my aunt towards some person whom she reviled for having deserted us.—Was it my mother, and was the divorce a consequence of that desertion? This was a pre-

bable deduction, yet I felt reluctant to admit it. To favor my repugnance I referred to the words "poor Julia," by which the divorced had been apostrophized.—*Poor* in our mystifying idiom is often a term of endearment;—had Cræsus been our countryman, beloved and maligned, he would have been lamented as "poor Cræsus." There was no such significant epithet bestowed upon Margaret Wallenberg; I caught at the idea that she was the reviled, for I was inconceivably averse from believing that my mother had forsaken us. As the children of her unhappy predecessor we were odious to, and abandoned by our step-mother. I felt unspeakable satisfaction at this arrangement, and endeavoured to substantiate my conclusion by looking back into the "dim and distant past."

I had had glimmering ideas of a fine mansion which I once inhabited; of nurses fondling and obedient. My sisters had been haunted by the selfsame unaccountable reminiscences—Marion's were the liveliest and strangest, but she protested they were dreams: Helen's though less improbable were more shadowy;

and mine were fainter still. In childhood we used to prattle of the golden home we came from; Marion would take the lead and tell us of a tall, terrible-looking ghost with sloe-black flashing eyes, who was with her in her sleep-life, as she called it, and made her cry, and scolded her for crying; adding thereto what we thought witch-matter, all of which she vowed that she had dreamed. Helen and I were easily persuaded to join in her belief, and to refer our fading recollections to the same fantastic source. I now began to think this sleep-life actual, and to wish the figures would stand out distinctly; but Marion's flashing Lady-spirit was the only shadow that came forward, and whether I should address it as Julia Derentsi or as Margaret Wallenberg, remained questionable.

At the sound of footsteps I snatched up my papers and withdrew to my own chamber. It seemed as if the desultory current of my thoughts had all at once found a fixed direction, a definite purpose. Registering on my tablets, as a rule of action, a remark of Madame Wallenberg's, that it is from observation of

character and of the every-day circumstances of existence that the mind derives its best experience, I determined, in adherence to this mental process, closely to investigate, to minute each occurrence of my life, and to arrange my memoranda at leisure; in time this journalising became a craving habit.

For a day or two my sisters, in our confidential hours, occasionally recurred to the *Deutsch-Mährchen*,* so named by Helen. Marion was exhaustless in conjecture; Helen's comments always ended in—"How I pity Madame Wallenberg!"—neither sister ever touched the clue which would have led them to the point I stood at.

But all discussion was soon absorbed by Kitty Reily's approaching nuptials. Notice had been given at Ballygobbin chapel, said Mrs. Mulligan; and in another week, please Father Crooney, the boys an' girls, tight an' tidy, would cover the buckle to 'the bottle o' punch,' and help the piper to discharge his dues for rattling the old bones of his poor Gran'mother.

* German legend.

--The Geraldine—God bless him! would pay the marriage fee, and help to fill the pewter.

Marion was now in gay *allegro*; the thing was to be done in style, she said, for Kitty was the *properest* girl in the glen, and had a stocking full of coppers to her portion. Blind Johnny handled the pipes to the full as well as Conlan; his music was more ancient and more touching; to be thrown into the back-ground would break the creature's heart. Conlan should hold the hat and earn the fine; but she herself would pay Johnny for 'the battle of Clontarf.'—Helen was quite as anxious as her sister; the baby factorers were splitting, sorting, weaving, and making the old walls ring to "Green grow the rushes O." Mats were to be made for all visitors whose homes were distant; an old oak chamber of the ruin, adjoining the school-room, was to be cleared of rubbish for the marriage feast; two of the lately farrowed *bonnaveens*, just one moon old, were promised by my aunt, and Katy promised to barbecue the pigmies. Even the cow and Lanty Maw contributed their meed unconsciously; for bawn and stable doors were sentenced to be taken off the hinges, and mounted on the

wash tressles for dinner tables. The glen-boys, eagerly submitting to conscription, assembled every dawn to the drumming of a cracked saucepan, and vigorously shouting "the wedding of Ballynamona," marched under Brigadier General Slauveen to mend the causeway, to dislodge the rats, and crowd away the rubbish which choked up the old oak chamber. Puffy-cheeked angels, wolves pasturing on human heads, dragons and other mythologic cattle, once high in frieze and fresco, were unceremoniously shovelled out, with the grim *genius loci*, a noseless bust of Pope Fergusius. Brackets weary of their saintly effigies, and cornice-fragments stamped with armorial bearings were huddled within an enormous chimney-place that stood out from the chamber walls, a melancholy void, which erst had canopied, perhaps, the roasted hog of Anglo Saxon orgies, or held within its ample sweep a Lord President's retainers.

All hands were active, even to my unskilful ones, and all heads employed in planning some attainable donation for the bride. Our Granny's spinning-wheel kept up a humming symphony

to little Berga's snap-reel; even I contributed my mite, an antique ring I found within the ruin, serving the bride elect for amulet. Helen's humble wardrobe grew daily scantier; she had so many things that Kitty wanted and she could do without. Marion having vainly tried to stretch her little shoe to Kitty's foot, went boldly to my aunt and begged her pair of second best; and the Baroness, discovering that Kitty's sweetheart had more love than lucre, made him proprietor of a trim fishing-craft, the only thing on earth besides his Kitty that he longed for. The news of this amazing bounty drew forth a stave so wild and shrill from our retainers, that little Berga, deeming it the voice of the seven thunders, fell upon her knees and poured out her sins with a cataract velocity. Granny stood aghast, apprehensive that the *wee wee womanie* would evaporate in words, and Slauveen and I, who had been heralds of the news and witnesses of this explosion, stood in rapt amazement: he doubted whether it were the actual dame Dumb-be-dead-alive or some twin exotic gifted like Quinilla, I questioned whether the verbose

deluge proceeded from the oral faculty of our little Quietist or from some hostile essence that had got possession of her.

On the evening of the day which had ushered in such wealth to the betrothed, we were assembled in the study, *tutti quanti*; my sisters, as had been customary for several days harping on the tedious subject which engrossed them. Kitty's finery was minutely itemed: her flowered wedding gown; her brand new scarlet cloak; her stuff petticoat, sky blue and elegantly quilted; her sprig muslin cap and clear muslin apron; her barcelonas, connamaras; even the shoes, as good as new, which aunt bestowed;—all met with notice and approval. Then came her farming stock, her fishing-smack and "*bit o' furnitory*,"—"She will be so very comfortable," said Marion.

"Not more than she deserves," rejoined Helen;—"Kitty is the best girl in the glen."

"Best is a high term," said the Baroness; "how is she the best, Helen?"

"She is so good a daughter," was the prompt reply.

"And so good a sister," added Marion; "she risked her life to snatch her little brother from a floating ice-bank."

"She would not marry till her mother granted her consent," said Helen, "although she doted upon William."

"Now don't you think," enquired Marion, "that we may call her the best, the very best?"

There was no reply; the Baroness looked grave and thoughtful; my sisters were briskly knitting, too heedful of their work to pause for recollection.

"Now don't you think," repeated Marion.

My uncle interrupted her—"Helen has your legendary lore deserted you?"

"To be sure it has," exclaimed my aunt, "and all her other wits into the bargain;—man, woman, and child think only of this wedding—I'm half bewitched myself.—Next week I hope our senses will return, and our pleasant evening tales—that was a pretty story about the high priest's grand-children."

"From Josephus," observed Marion, heedless of my uncle's loud and repeated hems—

"The death of Aristobulus. How beautifully Helen pictured the poor youth!—Mariamne too; how dreadful to be married to the man that killed one's brother!—There, I have dropped a stitch!—provoking—Helen's stocking will be finished first.—Were you ever at a wedding Madame Wallenberg?"

The features of the Baroness had assumed a deeper shade of thoughtfulness at every point of Marion's speech—"A wedding!" she exclaimed; "was I ever at a wedding?—Oh, what a fatal wedding have I been witness to!"

Marion looked up, threw away her knitting, and flew to Madame Wallenberg—"Did I say any thing to vex you?—Did I?—Good gracious now I recollect!—what *shall* I do?—I forget; indeed, indeed, I forgot.—"

Down fell *Cicero de officiis* on which my aunt had lodged her working tackle—thimbles, shears, and bodkin made a hideous clatter. My uncle threw the window open and inhaled a deep draught of the pure atmosphere. "I cannot stoop unto the lip-cheat Marion;" said the Baroness "your words were heart-search-

ing; they brought before me wedding pomp, a good and gentle child—the best, the very best!—*she* had no brother to be careful of, no mother to obey, but gratitude in that fond, timid creature was as powerful as filial love. She too would have renounced the man she doted on, for me—I saw her married to that man—with *my* consent.—Your words brought back these fatal nuptials, Marion; they brought back events more fatal still.—’Tis silly at my years, my child, to have to learn fortitude, but there are some affections which are ever green.—Walter do not look so sorrowful: read to me.”

There was an attempt to smile, but the effort only made the pain she suffered more apparent. Marion stood tearful and conscience-stricken; I fumbled for a book, so nervous and so absent that folio after folio followed the prostrate Cicero.

“What a lovely evening!” exclaimed Helen; “do look at that glorious sunset Madame Wallenberg; look at those leaves;—Marion your blackbird perches on a gilded branch.”

It was indeed a glorious sunset; the little headland was lapped in sparkling wavelets; rocks, woods and hills were tinged with a golden red; the water-falls and alder-leaves were whispering; a fishing boat was pushing from the point through gurgling ripples; and now its oars were scattering sun-showers on the heaths and grasses, and now its keel broke the smoother mirror of the distant bay, marking its seaward passage with a glittering furrow. Helen's well timed digression had collected us around the window; there was a long silence. Marion drew a stool to Madame Wallenberg's feet, and letting fall the wedding-hose, pressed the Baroness's hand, as if to make amends for her unhidden trespass. My aunt and uncle sat apart; the former stitching with all her might, but looking flushed and disconcerted: the latter vacantly regarding our prostrate Greeks and Romans.

"'Tis a Quaker's meeting," muttered my aunt at length.

The Baroness turned a kindly look towards her hostess.

"Is tranquil and beautiful heart-silence peculiar to those mild enthusiasts my good friend?—if so they are a happy sisterhood."

The light tone she assumed was evidently artificial: it struck me at once that hers was the defensive cheerfulness of a person earnestly sorrowful, yet too proudly resolute to wear solemn looks. My aunt, as if the Baroness's speech required a little studying, laid down her work and stared deliberately at a lonely goot which was musing on an opposite crag in bearded stateliness.

"These clouds seem rolling to my fatherland," said the Baroness; "they exhort me to a long, long journey."

These words upset my aunt's speculations; she looked wistfully at her guest, not clearly comprehending to what journey she alluded.

"Edward," continued the Baroness, addressing my uncle, "we have nothing more to deliberate upon; old times and trials have had their share of our attention; the tale is worn out my friend; to-morrow—"

"To-morrow!" we repeated breathlessly.

My uncle stooped to collect his scattered

folios; the Baroness viewed us with a smile, but it was a smile sadder far than tears. Her emotion passed away—"To-morrow," she continued gaily, "we begin to talk of leave-taking—only to *talk* Walter—you must give up your lady-love; remember I have other cavaliers to humour. Baron Wallenberg waits for me in London, and my son's letters are quite reproachful; they rail at my knights of Erin; I dare not own how much I am attached to them—a future visit might be interdicted."

"You will never come again," said Marion, with a half sob—"I know that you will never come again."

"But I will come little ghost-seer, to mar your prophecy; and I will bring you such a spectre-story!—Helen what shall I bring you?"

"Only the love you promised to me—Will you remember *me*?—I must remember *you*; indeed, indeed I love you as a daughter!"

The Baroness rose and hurriedly paced the room.—"Not as a daughter, Helen: not as a daughter;—love me with any love but that;—I could give you subject matter for a story,

Helen ; a stranger history, a more affecting, than even that selected from Josephus—Mariamne hated her brother's murderer, *my* daughter married the murderer of hers."

We looked at each other in mute dismay ; my uncle covered his face ; my aunt with uplifted hands appeared to deprecate some terrible disclosure. The Baroness was too much excited to perceive that my sisters and myself were more concerned than surprised.

"It was open slaughter certainly," she ejaculated, as if pursuing her own train of bitter recollection ; "yes it was open slaughter ; my son was killed in honorable combat ; and his sister—his sister ! Helen there are more harrowing accidents in *real* life—in *my* life—than in your romances—*Daughter* !—call yourself by any name but that !"

She hastily left the room ; my uncle followed her ; we were undecided how to act ; to soothe might be obtrusive and impertinent. My aunt, as if a ponderous weight which prevented her from breathing were suddenly removed, drew a long sigh—"Didn't I tell you," she

exclaimed, "didn't I tell you that no philosophy can cure the heart-burn?—'Tis a flimsy veil that serves us well in sunshine, but a storm soon rends it all to tatters. This comes of having children!—fancy a body being forced to hate one's own flesh and blood! This Baroness is prodigious stern at bottom; right generous to the good, but shews, you see, no mercy to the bad, nor even the indifferent; for after all, the man who married Margaret Wallenberg was no more a murderer than I am, although he killed a man—he killed the Count in open day—there was nothing underhand as in the case of Herod—no juggling, drowning, nor contrivances; no malice, not a bit, only a boiling passion—so you must not think too ill of him.—I wish I could say something in favor of that Margaret."

She gathered up her scattered threads and bustled off, leaving us to cogitate at leisure.

We were indisposed for conversation, and sat watching the ruddy sunset stealing up the mountains, our gloom increasing with the lengthening shadows. Helen's sympathy for

Madame Wallenberg was so keen, that I rejoiced I had withheld my suspicions of our near relationship. Not a word had fallen, even during the recent ebullition, from which our consanguinity could have been inferred by those not previously awakened to attention. On my first confused retrospect it appeared to me indeed that little of any nature had transpired beyond what I already was acquainted with; but, when I had recorded the substance of our evening's conversation, I found the heaviness of mind which overhung me was combatted by a growing satisfaction, as I eagerly perused my diary. Madame Wallenberg's words were decisive as to the innocence of my mother; none other save Julia Derentsi could have been designed by the "good and gentle."

I felt relieved of an oppressive yet indefinite misgiving as this conviction flashed upon me—My aunt's good nature might have warped her judgment to pity the deserted wife, but there was no weak side of false indulgence through which the Baroness could have been assailed.

Every relentless comment on the daughter sanctified the niece; she became hallowed in my tenderest affections, and in proportion as my love for her kindled into filial reverence, so did my dislike for Margaret Wallenberg encrease.

CHAPTER XI.

" Uprouse ye then, my merry merry men,
It is our *wedding* day."

SLAUVEN'S shrill *réveil* awoke me on the following morning. I descended to our little parlour, somewhat dubious how to accost Madame Wallenberg, but her polished and feminine hilarity at once reassured me; nay I fancied that to banish any awkwardness which the ebullition of the previous evening might have caused, her gaiety was more lavishly dispensed than ever; her images, though serious, were all upon a laughing ground.

My aunt's hospitable duties were suspended; the cups remained unfilled and the eggs forgotten in the saucepan, while the Baroness recounted what she entitled, quaintly, "the spring-green love-adventure of *Fräulein Berga*;" her arbitrary treatment of a grey-bearded gigantic *Rittersmann*, who, in his youth, had been one of Prussian Frederick's far-famed Patagonians. Besides being twice as old, he was twice as tall upon his knees as Berga upon tip-toe. They were reciprocal exaggerators of opposite magnitudes, he of the augmentative she of the diminutive, setting off each other beautifully. Berga, after coquetting a quarter of a century with this son of Anak, discarded him because his four front teeth, which he affirmed had been loosened by a bullet shot at Zorndoff, fell out. He died of love, or of old age, for he was eighty. Berga called herself his executioner, gave up coquetting, and fell at once into the prim, grave, silent, matron; mourned outwardly for years, and inwardly to the present moment; proving herself as faithful to the memory of her old and only love, as to the House of Wallenberg.

Thus did the Baroness bring forward some incident to banish our restraint, arraying it in the grotesque or the pathetic, or blending both. It mattered little who or what her personages were—poor, humble, ignorant, or feeble; they caught hold of our affections, and chained us to their fortunes. My uncle, however, participated little in our enjoyment: he was grave and thoughtful; Madame Wallenberg's efforts to induce a smile were unavailing; an incautious touch had opened ill-healed wounds; and feelings for a long time in abeyance, had revived.

The Baroness at length drew from her finger a signet ring, viewed it for a moment, and said—"Friendship perhaps, like gold, requires alloy to temper it, or rather like iron becomes from blows more closely welded—ours Edward has been cemented by rough strokes—this is your parting gift; your wedding ring has not been better guarded than your billet—seal—the device is humble; I had *andenken* cut beneath it—the word is almost worn out, and yet it will speak when I am dumb; it will bid you to remember—"

"Madame Wallenberg !" exclaimed my uncle in a reproachful tone.

"Yes," rejoined the Baroness, "it will bid you to remember Madame Wallenberg; the errors of the dead will be forgiven." She turned to my aunt—"Shall you be jealous my good friend if I bequeath his own gift to your husband?"

Her tone was neither tremulous nor solemn; she always spoke of death without emotion.

"Sure," exclaimed my aunt, with a look of recognition, extending her hand for the ring; "sure it is the very seal, with the little cow in the middle, which puzzled me so much when your letter came to hand—I thought the word was Greek—what does the cow signify I wonder?"

"It is not an emblem of the Geraldines," cried Marion, taking the ring; "their crest displays a more fantastic animal—a family relic is it uncle?—what *can* it illustrate?—Ah! now I recollect—The story is as old as the Geraldine rebellion; it relates to the five brothers of that darling Earl of Kildare, who made Cardinal Wolsey look so blank before

the King and Council. These five brothers, (uncles of Thomas the conspirator) were seized in Ireland upon suspicion, by King Henry's liege-men, forced into a ship, and sent away to England. They were stout of heart, knowing they had no hand in the rebellion, until one of them found out the ship was called "the Cow." He thereupon bemoaned himself so piteously that the others thought he was demented; his brethren joined him however when he revealed, that by a prophecy yet unfulfilled, five brothers of an Earl were to reach England in the body of a cow, and never to return. The poor Geraldines, sure enough, were put to death, and the prophecy fulfilled."

When Marion had arrived at this part of her tradition Madame Wallenberg replaced her ring and withdrew to the window. My uncle followed her, threw the sash open, flung the crumbs of our repast to a callow brood of chickens, and then commenced a whispered conversation with our visitor.

"Lord Gerald Fitzgerald," resumed Marion.

"Who?" exclaimed the Baroness, abruptly turning to my sister.

"The infant brother of silken Thomas to be sure, Baroness; he was saved by stratagem. Lord Gerald's adventures were very wonderful."

"Bless you!" cried my aunt, "don't mind her Madame Wallenberg; she is chattering of things that happened ages back! There are more Johns than one you know," she added, significantly nodding at the Baroness, "and so there are more Gerald's.—Walter, why, what on earth can you be thinking of?—Helen, child, tie up that straggling woodbine; 'twill poke our eyes out—Marion, tell Katy she may take away the breakfast things.—Come Baroness, come into the dairy; I'll shew you as lovely a real cream cheese as ever was wrapped in nettles—May be, Mr. Fitzgerald, you would look after Lanty Maw; he has broken through the paddock-fence. This cock-and-a-bull's tale of a cow has kept poor Katy from her breakfast."

I had little time for taking notes. Our Brigadier General and his pioneers were winding through the gap towards the cottage, squandering the melody of song and saucepan.

The Irish are profuse of every thing, particularly of noise, and I think our glen-boys had more varieties of that commodity than any other boys over a year and a quarter. If half the ingenuity applied in Ireland to institute an uproar were applied to forward agriculture, some of our political economists might be curtailed of much wise speculation. The present hubbub grew more energetic as it neared; I stopped my ears; Helen ran away, and Marion ran to meet it. The latter speedily returned in hysterics of delight—A select deputation had been nominated to express the thanks of the betrothed to Madame Wallenberg; shrieks of "*Jarmany* for ever, an' a happy death to her bountiful Baronship," split the air.

The spokesman proper now advanced—
"Tisn't dirty coppers *she'll* fling us, I'll be bound, disparaging her fingers, but yellow-hammers, *thrie-na-helah*, and good thirteeners—Screech boys, screech for her glorious Highness; don't stand for trifles; screech as if ould Noll was kickin' you!"

The notes of admiration, now shrilled horribly, brought Katy with the handle of the popc's head to disperse the rioters.

The day at length arrived, in full autumnal splendour, "the day of Kitty's wedding oh!"—a memorable day in the annals of our glen—It healed a feud, as old as the hag's wars,* between the great O'Reily's and O'Driscols. The bride, glowing like a full blown cabbage-rose, and rustling in glazed stuff and *oalkimanky* came, before tumult could imp its wing, to shower blessings, thick as wool, upon the Geraldines, and pay her duty to the Baroness. The bride's-maids, fluttering in gay ribbons, the hoods of their blue cloaks thrown back to shew the maiden snood and the unwonted sleekness of their redundant tresses, stood decorously aloof, drawn up within our little paddock, their downcast looks mimicked by the sniggering boys who lurked ripe for fun and mischief in the back-ground, restrained to the demure by Grace McQuillan's keen espial. Our Granny sat with the *Fräulein* beneath a

* The wars of Queen Elizabeth with the Irish, were so called.

royal porch for them especially erected, *forewent* the study window.

I wish a Wilkie could have seen them, Berga in her stiff German vesture, solemn as a tomb-stone, her eyes as indivertibly fixed upon a furze-bush as erst they had been upon the plate-rack, her heart, perhaps, inditing the Patagonian's epitaph;—Grace in her Celtico-Seythic costume, majestically grasping the sceptral holly-wand, masking her arch and almost girlish humour beneath the dignity becoming to her high prerogative, and turning an eye sinister upon a blooming adult of her flock, around whose ruddy mouth broad dimples were meandering, drawn forth by Dennis Ogue, who stood with folded hands, and lips pinched *up*, to *murther* her decorum. Our Granny's dexter orb gently admonished a row of *minutins* upon her right hand, Helen's merry brood, whose shining faces preeping through thick rings of golden hair demonstrated the virtues of a soap-polish. But Grace could not reprove the shout of admiration spontaneously emitted as the joyous troop surveyed each other's finery: stuff frocks and

blue checked *muckingers* provided by the Baroness; nor could she fetch up courage to rebuke the gleeful laugh which burst forth irrepressible, every time the holly-wand, horizontally extended, compelled a giddy straggler to fall back into the ranks.

The foreground filled up by these tiny actors was hemmed in by Slauveen's light infantry, in martial files extending across the roadway, the escort of the modest bridegroom Bill O' Driscoll. Bill occupied the central post in spic-span felt, ratteen, and corduroy; his honey-colored locks combed close and sleek around his roguish countenance—now, peering at the gentry with a sheep-like look, he pulled his *glib* and scraped his left foot gracefully; now turning on the gridders of his dazzling train with "boys behave yourself; I wonder at ye!" His retinue, in truth, was dazzling, for every jacket and coatee, however patched and threadbare, was adorned with rows of huge brass buttons, bright as Achilles' buckler, and every rust colored *canbeen* was set up rakishly at one side, and looped to a cockade which vexed the rainbow. The *tissys* and thirteeners of

her darling Baronship, meant for more home consumption, were lavished by these lads of metal upon the buttons, to shew their spirit in *doing the genteel* by Bill O'Driscol, and lightening the hard-ware of Ballygobbin. An acre of heath-flowers, bound into bouquets, was planted in their button-holes. Katy contemned this last adornment; it gave them, she observed, too *contrived* a look, and took from the killing cut of their appearance. Each cavalier flourished a verdant oak-twigg from which jingling tags of metal and other curious instruments of deafening music dangled. General Slauveen headed the detachment; he was distinguished from his obedient kerns less by his consequential strut than by insignia ever memorable—Quinilla's belt and buckle—the belt and buckle of the duck-pond—and Quinilla's scarlet feather; that feather once drooping gracefully even to the nose of our departed cousin, then, (dire vicissitude,) crushed into verdant mud and angular distortion; now furbished up anew, propped by dexterous contrivance into the martial perpendicular, and stuck into the gallant cocked-hat of her

soldierly Patricius. Some indescribable sensation made me wince at sight of these unblest mementos, and suddenly recoil from the window, whither we had crowded to inspect the bridal train. The drone of Conlan's bag-pipe now addressed the assembly.

"Come Walter, come: you'll lose it all," cried Marion.

The Bride had made her hundred reverences, had left the cottage, and stood culprit-like in front of Grace McQuillan, twitching her sprigged apron, awaiting fearfully the wife's exordium—"Whisht will ye!—hisht I say!" thundered by the General struck all things dumb; the bag-pipes ceased; the crowing cocks and children, the very ducks left off their cackle, awed by the sonorous voice of Grace McQuillan, dealing out her pithy apothegms.

"Kitty *a cushla* don't be stomachful; think less of your wedding garment than of your working gown; the penny for the rainy day is better than the one-pound-one in sunshine Kitty; 'tis not great gains but little good-haps make us comfortable; heaps gallop off but

handfuls stay at home; don't fault the spade your husband digs with Kitty; ill-luck is never mended by ill-humour; *smother your sauciness*; one spark of a keenogue* would burn Ballygobbin! if bees have stings remember they have honey-bags; a bad potato-season might bring a thriving autumn;—don't be knowledgeable *eroo*, let the *man* be master—the girls' eyes are on you Kitty; a smiling wife makes a score o' weddings, a sour wife makes a pitful of old maids: never leave off your reverence for them above, your love for them below you Kitty.—And now *Bail o' Dia duibh a cushla!*†—Go home to your tidy bachelor—Father Croony will sermon the remainder."

A fierce hurroo and swirling of cockades wound up this excellent discourse.

The train was now in motion, swaying to and fro like poppies in a hurricane, but a second authoritative "whisht!" spoiled the first bar of "Corporal Casy," and "halt!" brought boys and girls to a stand-still.—"Would ye

* Turf sod kindled. † Blessing of God to you my darling.

leave the best half o' the company behind, ye negurs?" vociferated the commanding officer—"wait for the gentlefolk!"

"Is it our quality to tread in your heel-mark you impudent rogue you!—is it our masthers you mean!" cried Katy, who had stood puffing a pensive pipe, wavering whether at once to join the wedding shew, or to stick to the *piggeens* she was embalming for the wedding dinner—" 'twould be well in their way indeed—I like your audacity!"

Slauveen's response was an inimitable stare of wondering contempt; he deliberately advanced, made a stand before the paddock, neighed, lowed, and snorted. Lanty on the instant stalked from his doorless stable and joined the martial throng—a staggering calf kicked up its hind legs, whisked its tail, and followed.—The cow was next enlisted by a deep-sounding bellow—alternate grunt and squeak assured the pig and all the tender porkers—the ducklings shook their wings and waddled from the pond, obedient to a qua-ake sustained until the hindmost was on its legs and marching—cocks, hens, and chickens, toddled off in turn

—grimalkin followed with her litter—a bray, wild echoing, forced a meditative ass from his recumbent posture. Even Quinilla's pug, though yelping spitefully, was overcome by sharp temptation. These raw recruits, hailed by successive shouts of exultation, were soon embodied with the regulars, and marched off with a clamour too intense for meek remonstrance to prevail.

My aunt grew pale with horror when the whole squadron of *irrationals* rounded the gap and became lost to vision. Not a kitten lagged to feel the clutch of Katy, who had rushed like a tornado to reclaim the *black mail* so impudently levied: she dared not however trust herself beyond the pale of our protection.

But to describe the frolics of this merry forenoon is altogether hopeless. The glen was active even to its peat-sods, which were hurled aloft, merely that the atmosphere might share in the confusion. The stay-at-homes were equally inclining to the topsy-turvy—Marion walked up and down in idle flutter, marking the changes of the hurly burly—Helen too, was restless as a bird's wing—considering my mood-

ful temperament, I was exhilarated extremely; and even the grave Elders of our household would, ever and anon, protrude a head to catch the distant uproar.

Mrs Mulligan, though very much affronted, and bent on *scurra-fingeing* Lanty and the cow, never relaxed in dinner preparation. The perfume of roast pig, black pudding, and *avishceens** might have provoked the mandibles of Epietetus. The *corcrant*† emitted an ambrosial steam, for Katy, to save time and keep the old oak chamber *nate* for dancing, had peeled the mealy kidneys, crushed them to *brutheen*‡ and smothered them with milk and a sprinkling of salt butter. The roast was done to half a turn, and ready to be dished—"But neither crube nor trotter," said Katy, "shall walk out of this kitchen till every mother soul that sen o' Cren-mell *slewdered* us out of, shall walk back!" The dinner-fetchers, however, were too acute to face the fractious Priestess without an adequate oblation. The decoyed strays were driven home lamenting, and Katy was propitiated with

* Sheep's fry. † Large pot. ‡ Mashed potatoes.

a ribbon for her cap, cribbed out of a cockade.

"There's no use in talking," cried my aunt, as she watched the dinner pages freighted with the savory messes, dexterously wending from the cottage to the ruin—"there *is* no use in talking Baroness; we may as well give up the day; indeed it is as good as gone already.—If one wedding makes a score we shall have a score too many. What a racket!—Pray Heaven these people don't get fuddled!—Helen you forebade *scalteen* I hope—Ah! there goes Katy to the dinner—'tis well *we* got a morsel—Katy come here; keep the boys sober, I beseech you."

"There's no occasion," answered Katy, bridling, "there's not a lad from nine an' thirty down to a *thackeen** would break the hand and word he gave the masther. Our boys may play tricks on tyrannisers but they'd scorn to insult their consciences. 'Tis time for *you* to know their manners Ma'am."

"There now!" exclaimed my aunt, arching her brows most piteously, "she's gone off in a

* Little girl.

huff!—Just fancy her fighting for those very plagues she vowed vengeance on; an outrage! But that's the way with all the Irish—either staring or stark mad! they'll blow your brains out, and then blow out their own for sheer remorse."

"A strange people," said the Baroness, musing; "daring and deeply sensitive, yet full of levity; familiar, yet profoundly reverent; vindictive and forgiving; a compound of attractives and repellents."

"Repellents!" echoed Marion; "repellents did you mean Madame Wallenberg?—our poor dear Irish!—Helen wo'n't you speak for them?"

"They want no intercessor with the Baroness," said Helen; "she understands them now as well as we do; and who can read the Irish peasant's character without discerning through all its reckless impulses, a chivalric and generous fidelity?"

"More attractive than repulsive at any rate," rejoined Marion—"are not the four O'Carrolls darlings?—and the Driscolls—look at Susan Driscoll!"

"Marion," said the Baroness, "you are

angry; do you forget that I have envied the mother of your peasant bride?"

My uncle shifted his chair. The Baroness glanced at him a moment and resumed—"My study of the Irish character, Marion, has been most salutary; it has taught me to make allowances for natures fiery and rash; it has taught me that acts once ascribed to premeditation might have been caused by the recklessness of an uncurbed, impetuous spirit, tested perhaps too harshly—it has taught me to be lenient; almost to forgive."

A slight ejaculation uttered by my uncle made me observe him closely; there was a silent upturning of the eyes which expressed thankfulness and joy—"She alludes to my poor father," thought I.—My sisters looked at the Baroness, as if seeking to penetrate her meaning, or awaiting further comment; but perceiving that she was comprehended by the parson she desired to satisfy, Madame Wallenberg arose and took a book.—It opened at the *Antigone* of *Sophocles*, and I was required to translate it—"Do Walter," said my aunt, "read us something; 'twill drive this wedding

from our heads, and keep us in our seats—
Marion makes me giddy—I want to whip this
shirt-frill.”

Nervous at the task imposed, (than which to
execute, the castigation of the shirt-frill would
have been preferred,) I laboured through this
dramatic master-piece, like a panting school-
boy, and found myself at length translating the
pathetic address of Antigone when dragged to
the fatal cavern by the satellites of Creon.

“Must I then descend, young, full of life,
unlamented, into the chambers of the grave!—
Light of Heaven, farewell!—Oh tomb! oh
dungeon home! eternal resting-place! Destiny
horrible, immitigable!—this dismal track will
lead me to my kindred dead; will unite *me*, the
last and the most wretched, to my miserable
race.”

“That’s enough! that’s enough of it in all
conscience,” exclaimed my aunt, with an im-
patient jerk;—“Madame Wallenberg will ex-
cuse the rest I dare say.—For my part I had
rather hear a shout that would split my ears
than such a story.—Pretty models for young
people!—Those Greeks were proper savages

to bury one alive for next to nothing—But 'tis a pack of shocking lies, I know it is—Fore-doomed by lying oracles indeed—Just look at Marion; she takes it all for gospel—Why children, you don't believe that string of horrors happened!"

"Helen," said Marion, in a low voice, "do you believe in destiny? Granny does."

"Believe in fiddle-sticks!—you'd fret a saint!" exclaimed my aunt.—"Believe in the laws of God—believe you can't evade them—that's the point.—Destiny indeed!—a nice excuse for crimes and blunders!—If a man to cross a pit trust to a crazy plank and tumble in, call it his folly not his destiny; I have no patience with fatality disciples, who lay to heaven's door their own imprudences."

"And yet," said Marion, "I have a leaning to this same fatality—Had I been born a Greek of heathen times, I dared not have consulted oracles, for were the doom predicted me, malignant, from very horror I might conduce to its accomplishment."

I had laid down my book, and was considering the argument. A flashing recollection

called forth by Marion's emphatic words made me look towards our elders.—My uncle and the Baroness exchanged rapid glances of intelligence, characterized by something of dismay; but my aunt's countenance was the very type of consternation; her eyes were riveted on Marion as if my sister were actually about to accomplish a doom terrible as that awarded to Antigone; while the person so intently watched, unconscious of the terror she excited, continued to pour forth chapters of warning and prognostic delivered by our Irish oracles, Warlocks, and Banshees, all of which she strenuously maintained had been fulfilled.

Helen, taking the ground my aunt had so suddenly abandoned, skilfully combated the enthusiast, referring prodigy and prophecy to a higher source than human agency, and contending that prudence, in most of the alleged instances would have baffled these self-constituted fortune-tellers.

“To be sure,” exclaimed my aunt, resuming her self-possession and her shirt-frill, “to be sure it would—that’s right, Helen!—prudence is a noble virtue!—By prudence one may

avert eyes—I mean to say that—that—that the bride and bridegroom should be prudent.”

This unexpected climax, which brought us from our altitudes to the day's humble frolic, made us laugh; even my uncle and Madame Wallenberg, hitherto serious and abstracted, smiled at the whimsical wind-up.

“*Quant on parle de l'été, on en voit les oreilles*,” said my uncle. “Behold the bride and bridegroom!”

“Now coming up the path—’tis Kitty and her husband sure enough,—Pray Heaven they are full of no disaster!”

“Not they,” said Helen; “Kitty’s face is bright as her new ribbon!”

“I wish they would walk faster then, and put us out of pain; it strikes me, William looks a little non-plused.”

When the radiant pair found out they were copied, the scrapes and courtesies, limiting their progress to a snail’s pace, severely tried my poor aunt’s philosophy. At length they reached the casement, and, between blushes and beg-pardons, were delivered of their embassage, the

gist of which set forth, that if our honors would bestow our company just to hear blind Johnny play *the Groves o' Harney* 'twould put the poor ould man upon the pig's back with *comale*. The dinner was cleared out, the room was *clane* as a *crame-cheese*, and rows o' benches for the quality, an' Johnny's throne with laurel boughs so beautiful, an' all the lads so *reasonable* !"

My uncle nodded when Marion turned her entreating eyes towards him ; my aunt bent hers on Madame Wallenberg. Kitty, dropping as many dips as words, hoped her honorable Baronship would just consider how all their hearts would jump for joy at a single sight of her. Still they would be loth to make her come against her will ; 'twould be the transportation of um altogether, if she would *condesind*, but no *offence* in life if she would not.

No one could perform a gracious act more graciously than Madame Wallenberg.—She had been longing to hear blind Johnny, and had hoped to be invited ; the evening was delightful, and—

"Didn't I tell you so?" interrupted Kitty ;
"didn't I tell you so, William Driscoll?—
You'll b'lieve *me* Bill another time."

And off they scampered, without leave-take,
to spread the glorious tidings.

The bridal troop was drawn up on the
causeway, to conduct us to the ball-room.
Never perhaps was wild mountain scenery
more impressively relieved with living figures ;
the party-colored wedding-group at once rude
and singular, momentarily encreasing in size
and strangeness, for skiff after skiff, freighted
with tardy friends, approached from the outer
bay with joyous cheers, and landed at the
ruin. Lake and land, torrent-bed and dizzy
cliff, had each a gipsy-group of wild rejoicers.
The baby rioters, variously dispersed, were
plashing in a fastened boat, clinging to a mast,
or toppling down a heather-bank, all screaming
with delight.

Conlan, perched on Katy's sacking tub, coax-
ing the balmy air into his modulation-bag, was,
for the nonce, prime agent of festivity, puffing
Molowny's jig in measure so precipitate that
his votaries spun round and snapped their

fingers as if bitten by *tarantule*. Slauveen, not satisfied with the moving-influence of this exciting music, whistled away with all his might, while heel and toe, and head and arms were shaken as vigorously as if their proprietor meant to part with them; even Berga seemed bewitched; her head, too, was nimbly nodding, and but for Grace, who guarded her discreetly from the whirring throng, her feet might have been detected, for the first time in forty years, performing a *coupés*.

The jig was suddenly wound up at our approach, and the drone merged beautifully into *Sheel na Gairn*, newly christened, "the Wallenberg Gavotte." The dancers wiped their temples and fell into a row at either side, as we proceeded to the ruin. The ball-room was lighted up by sun beams which struggled through the ivy foliage that clung to the mullions of an oriel window; it was already tenanted by hoary Elders, the priest and Kitty's aged people, appointed to receive us; but the most imposing personage of the assembly was a stately blind old man, exalted on a rustic throne which Marion had canopied with laurel

and arbutus. His extinguished orbs were fixed in an unavailing gaze, yet his expression was resigned; he clasped his silent pipe with a mild and satisfied devotion; the furrows of his ample forehead softened by a patient smile. Johnay was a faithful illustration of the Irish troubadour of olden times; a stringless harp, the emblem of his former state and calling, was borne by the guide who led the old man through his darksome pilgrimages; his long striped *traise** the work of Grace McQuillan, displayed the bardic colors; and even his time-worn *colamort*† was fancifully patched, and fell from his shoulders beneath the masses of his silver hair with something of classic negligence. The harpist, 'tis true, had sunk into the piper, but such a piper!—The wind that filled his tubes was fairy wind; it could "*shake the barley*," yea and the rough stubble; never debased into a drone, nor suffered to indite the vulgar jig, it was consecrated to the sweet and the pathetic; it resembled

"The swelling
Of summer wind through some wreathed shell,"

* Long stocking. † Cloak.

and, like the entrancing odes of Ireland's immortal bard, the most untutored intellect acknowledged its enchantment.

The signal of our entrance drew forth a martial salutation into which a few melancholy notes, as if unconsciously, intruded. The minstrel, kindling and elated, after a brilliant prelude, dashed into *the battle of Clontarf*, and then by a series of complicated modulations in which the musical proportions were skilfully preserved, sank into a plaintive melody, and made every heart respond to *Cruachan na Feene*. The applause of the Baroness gratified the proud old man more than her tribute to his poverty—but 'Lodbrog's death-song,' solicited by Marion, was cut off untimely, for Conlan, jealous of his aged rival, compressed his bag maliciously and struck up *Peas upon a trencher*.

"'Tis too bad," said Marion; "Conlan has had the profits of the day and might as well have left the glory of it to poor old Johnny—he had best beware of *Morgan Rattler*!"

But the brisk notes lavishly poured forth by the transgressor overpowered censure; his abrupt transitions left no opening for remon-

strance; *the trencher* glided into *Tade you gander*; *Tade* without proeludium was changed into *Moll Roe*; even Johnny's venerable head kept time to *Danty Davy*, and every tuneful noddle in the room, (Berga's fast as any,) wagged furiously to *Bob and Joan*.

At last my aunt, declaring that her ears ached, arose to go, but the bridegroom begged the young Misthisses and Master Walter might see *his* Kitty foot *the Foxhunter*.—The Baroness gaily requested to be included with the young ones; my aunt and uncle left the room, and the national dance recommenced with all the national spirit and expression. In every breathing pause the out-door cheers gave note of fresh arrivals, but none save the *élite* were suffered to intrude upon *the quality*. Slauveen was Kitty's partner; he danced with hat in hand, and the inimitable grimace with which he bowed to little Berga as he passed her in his mazy evolutions, kept the lookers on in a continual giggle.—Laugh outright, they durst not *for all Corn*, while her Baronship remained.

I was standing near the antique fire-place

gazing at an angel's head which was peeping from the rubbish piled within the chimney-gorge, and thinking less of the present scene than of the comments which my version of Antigone had called forth. A tumult on the causeway, with reiterated cheers, made me turn to Helen and suggest the fitness of our removing the constraint which our presence imposed upon the merry-makers. My sisters instantly arose, but Madame Wallenberg's attention was rivetted; our repeated hints were unattended to—"Walter what is it?" she exclaimed abruptly.

The crowd of *curiosi* blocking up the entrance had given way to admit a singular procession—"What is it?" she repeated, in a tone of consternation—"what is it, Walter?"

I looked—it was—good gracious it was Quinilla!

CHAPTER XII.

" They come unbidden,
Like frés at a wedding,
Thrusting their faces
In better guests' places."

It *was* Quinilla—it was her scarlet habit fresh as ever—her quizzing glass new set—her yellow boots new fronted—her head arrayed in spangled gauze and gum-flowers—she never looked so splendid!

I shook from head to foot; my deluding visions fled.—She had not, then, bestowed herself on either painter—perhaps she had; for one of them, (the plain one,) was behind her, with some nondescript creation, half monkey

and half man. But my cousin was already at my elbow ; she had hugged my sisters, pinched my arm caressingly, and clutched the aristocratic hand of the astonished Baroness.

“ And how do you do ? and how is every one of you and every bit of you ?—Did you think I had gone off ?—I wanted to astonish you !—We arrived about an hour ago, and put Lanna into such a fluster ! she told me where you were and all about the Baroness ; so I *settled myself* and off I came—My habit is rather hot ; I only changed my hat, but *Madam Wallenberg* knows what it is to be without one’s *fam de shamber*. Mrs. Bullock has hired such a clever girl, brought up by *Mosheer* I-forget-his-name in Paris—Theodore says Monimia Bullock’s head is quite as good as any head in *Mosheer’s* shop. But patience ! how absurd I am—come hither, *The* :—let me present you to the Baroness—This is my brother, Theodore O’Toole, Esquire, just returned from abroad, my lady—your ladyship will excuse his travelling trim—*The* : is so accustomed to a lacquey.—And this is Mr. Fielding, a pictorial friend of mine—and—ah !—where’s Sandford ?—not

far off I dare say—I'm sadly quizzed about him Helen."—she tittered and affected to conceal a blush—"Law Baroness! can you endure the riff-raff of this place?—the country is a horrid bore to one accustomed to a *certain* set. How did you leave the Baron?—well I hope."

Madame Wallenberg bent to this address with frigid stateliness; she had hastily disengaged her hand from Quinny's clutch, but the name of O'Toole had satisfied her that our cousin was not some errant and bewildered maid. She took my arm, and slightly acknowledging the solemn reverence of Theodore, which caused the little tails of his coateen to culminate, she turned to the festive group, now still as blocks, and gaping at the unwelcome apparition. This movement led our cousin's eyes to her Patricius—back she recoiled, grimly viewing her resuscitated feather. The Esquire had in his mortal panic abruptly halted, mounted his gallant hat, ordered arms, and stood *not* at ease, not even able to equivocate a welcome. His brain seemed emptied of resources; he made no effort to slip off,

nor even to slip off the treacherous belt, which now, right faithfully, adhered unto his tunic. It was a subject for a painter—Quin electrified—Slauveen dumb-founded.—The transition to dead silence was appalling—pipes, prating gossips, peeping children, all were dumb—the weird maiden had transfixed us !

But the most wonder-stricken of the party was, beyond question, the *Fräulein* ; her eyes were positively widening from amazement ; Quinilla was their mark, nor in all the shiftings of the scene did she remove them, for one second, from our cousin. The bride recovered first, and acted bravely to avert the falling thunderbolt. With a demurely roguish look she marched up to the male O'Toole and curtsied, begging his honor would *make bold* to stand the ground with her. This unlooked for venture led our regards to the person thus addressed. The outline of a gaunt baboon might have stood for his profile—high maxillary bone, ridged with sandy whiskers ; very little forehead, very little prominence of nose, except at the extremity, and that was lavishly spread out on lemon-colored cheeks ; but the

flatness and deficiency of upper feature were compensated by a solid mass of chin, and an abundancy of mouth, which protruded lovingly, and extended almost to a pair of monstrous ears that stood aloof from his head, as if shrinking from his organs of destructiveness. A stupid grin overspread the heavy countenance at Kitty's invitation; he eyed his doe-skin dittos and topped boots, stroked his bottle-green lapels, and stuck his hands into his waistcoat pockets; "Dance! what nonsense that is now! Fielding have you got a pair o' gloves in your pocket?"

"Dance here!" ejaculated Quinilla; "why Theodore O'Toole I'm horrified!—are you beside yourself dear *The* :?"—She beat him tenderly, and turned to the Baroness—"The fashionable dances now, my lady, are French cotillions and the *Heeland* fling—if you could only see Monimia Bullock shuffle!—she learned of *Fontaine*—a feathered Mercury as some one says—though Dionysius Bullock sticks to the old country dance.—Think of me leading off four and twenty couple at his fancy ball! I was Virginia; Theodore was Paul; my partner was

a Mr. Sanford, an artist of some eminence ; he was in a domino ; the tune was Money Musk !”

“ No, twas ‘the Dusty miller’ I assure you,” put in *The*:—“ I and *Moneemia* turned every couple to the very bottom.—Don’t you remember our dancing hands all round without taking any hands at all?—that was my idea—I never was so hot in all my life.”

While these *illuminati* thus displayed their deep research, Fielding had ensconced himself between the abutments of the window, and seemed impressing on his *pictorial* fancy the thousand shadings of the landscape, from which the sun was just departing. Compared with Sanford I had thought him as unfavored as myself.—Compared with Theodore O’Toole, Esquire, I thought him fit subject for Apelles. The maudlin, low-browed face of the O’Toole was a fine set off to Fielding’s elevated front, and grand contemplative expression. I considered the young artist with singular content, from the relief which he afforded to this meagre type of rationality. He caught my eye and nodded : I would have given him a warmer greeting, but I dared not quit the Baroness, a

feature in whose character, hitherto masked, had been suddenly revealed. From the courteous gentlewoman, urbane and gracious, she was at once transformed into the lofty magnate. Not all our cousin's blandishments could impress the frostwork of her tranquil haughtiness, or win her even to amenity. The countenance fraught with sympathy for the old blind beggar, now wore a character of stern reserve ; and the stateliness natural to this high-bred woman, put off to meet with polished tolerance or friendly pleasantry my aunt's blunt honesty, was instantly resumed to awe Quinilla's coarse familiarity. But Quinilla had, in her *own right*, too much self-importance to be easily repelled ; she beset the Baroness with the softest eloquence, exerted all her novel power of entertainment, described her coterie, the leaders of the Cork *haut ton*, with graphical precision, dexterously quoting as umpires of the Munster Areopagus, Dionysius Bullock and Theodore O'Toole ; the latter of whom she trippingly affirmed had lately returned from making *a grand tour*. In this shew off our cousin did not mean to perpetrate a bounce ; the *tour* of

London was in her geography the grand one.

Meantime our roguish bride was quite as earnestly besieging Theodore, importunate from sheer love of mischief. The embarrassed beauty wriggled from side to side, while his tormentor encouraged him not to look so shame-faced.—The step would come quite natural, like March in Lent—to be sure his legs looked rather stubborn, but Conlan's pipes would take the stiffness out of um.

"Stiffness!" exchoed *The*: eyeing his calves with anxious tenderness—"the girl is blind! be off good ooman—don't bother me I tell you—'tis a shame to *tase* a man that way, by all our *ancesthurs* 'tis too *unrasonable*."

"So it is by mine," exclaimed a voice, "to let a pretty woman stand *that way*—Take *me* my lass; I'm dying for a dance, and parted galligaskins for the purpose.—Strike up my honest piper."

Not even the presence of "the quality" could repress a whooping of applause for the new comer, which glided into a hollow groan for the buckeen. The next moment Sanford and

the bride were *polishing the flure*, in emulation of each other, the lookers on protesting the young man's legs were just as limber as "the unburied legs" that ran one Sunday morning four *hunder* miles without a halt.

Quinilla's battery was now confined to eye-beams and these being directed at the agile youth, we had time to think of a retreat, which Madame Wallenberg at once commenced—Helen ventured to remind her of Quinilla, but the Baroness coolly remarked that her good friend's tea hour was already passed.

Our exit was unnoticed, Sanford had eclipsed us all; even crutch-sticks and wooden legs were showering acclamation. Rueful cogitations attended our return.

"I thought you'd never come!" exclaimed my aunt, who was briskly walking round and round the tea table—"Where's Quinilla?—I was so sorry—I mean to say I was so glad to see her back again—Theodore is grown a fine young man—don't you think so, Madam Wallenberg?"

Heedless of reply, she looked at Helen with the most intensely wo-begone expression—

"What am I to do with them?" she whispered—"What on earth ~~am~~ I to do with them!"

The Baroness was unused to such emergencies as those which plagued her hostess, and had quite forgotten the strait we had been driven into by Berga's unlooked for introduction. Thus while poor aunt was pitched by turns to either horn of a dilemma, her guest sat quietly confabulating the day's events with Marion.

But I had been conning this double difficulty during our homeward walk, and now proposed resigning my apartment to Quinilla, and occupying the oak chamber of the ruin with the male O'Toole. Rush squabs and matting, with a coverlid or two, would furnish couches: "and," added Helen, "the weather is so fine there is no danger, aunt, of Walter's taking cold."

This last remark established sunshine. My aunt had now no drawback on her joy; she ranged her cups with blithe alacrity, interspersing her eulogies of Theodore with tintinnabulary appeals to Katy for more spoons and plates, and an occasional admonition to keep the *kettle* boiled for Miss Quinilla and the

company. A quavering cachinnation with the deep bass of Theodore's horse-laugh accompaniment wafted through the window, made me gulp down my tea at considerable risk, and withdraw to the remotest corner—I would have absconded, but the Baroness alone had time to escape, before the passage was filled up by our cousin and suite.

"Come in, come in, Mr. Sanford; you must; upon my honor you must—I'm very despotic—a downright Desdemona!—Come in can't you—Law! don't look so bashful; *I'll* introduce you to the Baroness.—*The*: make the creature shew himself." *The*: entered lugging in "the creature." My aunt saluted the group with a volley of welcomes, poured out tea, and recommended her slim cake.

"Well sister," said Quinilla, "*I'm* not in love with your fine lady I can tell you—she looks like any thing but a woman of rank—struck of a heap when Theodore bowed—totally unused to people of fashion—no language—no address—stiff as a poker—well-bred people are never at a loss—shut up in some *framontane* castle from the hour she was born,

depend upon it: I declare to you I pitied her uncommonly."

This judgment, which staggered all my poor aunt's preconceived opinions of her guest, caused such an unaffected stare, and such a halt in the tea-cup then journeying to her lips, that Sanford sprang forward to rescue the trembling china.

"I never saw more ungenteel behaviour in my life!" resumed Quinilla, "nor a worse dressed figure—quite preposterous!—*she* a woman of fashion!—fudge!—Trains are out, and gowns of all sorts—old as the North star! *The*: will tell you *that*—no such things *in being* when he was abroad."

My aunt's stare grew more intensely stultified.—"Do you mean that the Baroness should go *without* a gown Quinilla?"

"Gowns!" cried *The*: "who the plague would wear a gown! jackets and petticoats are all the go."

"Brother are you wild?—would you have a woman of sixty ferked out in a jacket like a show-girl?"

"The most becoming dress was ever worn!"

said Quinilla—Mr. Sanford vowed I never looked so well in all my life as at the fancy ball—I was quite in character—Virginia wore a jacket—no one could tell me whether her petticoat was flounced, so Mortimer McCarthy bade me finish mine with four rows of puckered scolloping and a heading edged with bugles, to imitate the pearl shells of that blackamoor Island she was born in—'Twas *Shuperb!*"

"The petticoat could not be amiss," observed my aunt, "but jackets are only fit for boys, or babes like Marion there."

Quinilla reddened—"I assure you, sister, Mr. Sanford said—tell Laurentia what you said—didn't you protest I"—

"Never looked more lovely!" added Sanford, with a countenance so animated and a gesture so emphatic that my heart bounded with delight.—Quinilla, to all intents and purposes, had captivated the handsome painter!—How I revived at this conviction!—I left my corner to address the welcome guest, who, without disarranging any one, had wedged himself between my sisters, and was then receiving Marion's

lively thanks for his good nature to her favorite Kitty.

Among all the varieties of character which crossed my worldly path I never met an individual so gracefully impertinent as Sanford. He could overstep the line of gentle breeding and make his trespass pass for a refinement. There was a nameless charm in his negligence which seduced the most fastidious. The goddess of decorum might have mistaken him for one of her discreetest votaries at the moment he most impudently infringed her decalogue. My admiration of his confidence was in proportion to my own deficiency in this serviceable attribute.

Quinilla now opened her budget of city news, and detailed her adventures at Mr. McCarthy's drum, where the first people in Cork had been assembled to celebrate the birth-day of the McCarthy heiress. "Such a *scroodge*!—The supper was *shuperb*—fowls, scollops, pickled salmon, sweets of all sorts, catches and glees, cold punch, a garnishing of colored comfits, two fiddles and a dulcimer!—The rooms were lit

with real wax—Mrs. Mahony hinted they were mock, but—”

“And so they were I’m positive!” blustered O’Toole, “*Moneemia* told me, too, half the *cheers and toebles* were her mothers. That hair-ess you cry up so, looked for all the world like a Friesland hen! she wears her hair like you,” addressing Helen—“but then she’s not so *poorty*, and her tail is foxy.”

“Sir!” ejaculated Helen, with a look of profound astonishment.

“’Tis true as you are there—quite foxy!—I advised her to mount peg-heels. She’s very squat; now you,” he added, surveying Marion, “you would look all the better for peg-heels; stand up.”

“Pardon, my exalted friend!” cried Sanford, gently repelling the clumsy fist extended to enforce his order; “one word of explanation—What do you mean by Friesland hen, peg-heels, and foxy?”

“Did you never see carroty hair and heel-taps!” cried O’Toole, glaring raw astonishment—“Well, you’re a wiseacre!”

"You flatter me," said Sanford; "I concede the title to yourself; will you interpret Friesland hen?"

"Friesland hen—don't you know what that is?—a Friesland hen is—why 'tis an owl in an ivy bush to be sure, or something o' that sort—something all frowzed and hornified like Miss Casy at the play when the bleeding nun comes in."

"I wish Katy would bring candles and take away the tea things," said my aunt.

"Beauty loves the shade," exclaimed Quinilla, "where in the name of wonder has that creature Fielding hid himself?"

"I never thought of him," replied my aunt; "the tea is cold."

"Sanford wo'n't let me touch my *poorty* cousin, sister," grumbled Theodore; "I want to measure her.—The other is the beauty though; the very height a girl ought to be."

I could have kicked him!

"Brother you must not flatter these poor

children," said my aunt; "they may believe you."

"Would you down-face us they are not *poorty* would you!—that's capital!—children indeed!—I like a joke!—wouldn't you call my cousins *poorty* girls Sanford?"

"Your tenses, like your metaphors confound me," replied Sanford. "Forgive my ignorance; what I *would* say is regulated by what I *should*."

"Well," cried Quinilla, "you have the prettiest way of saying a soft thing Mr. Sanford!—not always so backward in compliments for all that!—Do you remember what you said to me at the Bullock fancy-ball?"

"Is it possible I could forget!" said the young man impressively.

My indignation at the O'Toole impertinence was softened by this added proof of Sanford's devotion to our cousin.

"Walter," whispered Helen, "my aunt will explain our arrangements to her brother; Madame Wallenberg is alone."

The entrance of Mrs. Mulligan with lights, pursued by pug, who scampered to Quinilla, yelping his rapture, made our exit feasible.—Helen sought the Baroness; I strolled towards the ruin.

CHAPTER XIII.

" What scared St. Anthony ?
Fierce Anthropophagi,
Spectra, Diabole,
Night-riding Incubi,
Troubling the phantasm,
All dire illusion
Causing confusion."

WHAT is so beautiful as night—a moonlight night—and mountain scenery ; and silence to enjoy them. Solitude and starry night allay the feverish throb of discontent and harmonize discordant feelings. Coarse laughter, silly prate, Quinilla and Quinilla's brother were forgotten.

Of the bridal revelry scarce a trace remained. An hour had changed the aspect of the scene, as though an age had passed. The bay which had reflected flying skiff and sail, and dancing group, life's merry panorama, now gave back images of sombre stillness; the rocks gigantic shadows, the moveless branches of the trees, and the cleft walls of the ruin looking ghastly in the moonlight. The only vestige of the late festivity was the piper's tribune, (Katy's salt-ing tub,) deserted near the portal. I passed it, moralizing on its mutations since the dawn—reversed—right-sided—apickle-cask—a throne.

“That's Master Walter's lazy leg I'd take my davy,” sighed a voice. A head was raised above the tub-rim, so wan! it could not be our gallant generalissimo—“'Tis not Slauveen?” I cried.

“Haith! but it is though; 'tis Slauveen himself crammed into a pickle-keg like corned crubeens, sir—the life is downright dead inside of us!—no wonder!—didn't she break out on us just like a rebellion? Think of this morning Master Walter, think of it; just as we got upon the skirts o' joy!—an' now!”

Even *I* was confounded at the grief-created pause.—This new Diogenes, (from his stoic prototype degenerate,) actually wept.

“To bring back herself was bad enough,” resumed Slauveen, “but to bring us her double too! as ugly a baste as ever our good looking eye was frightened by.”

“Be more respectful Slauveen, you speak of your mistress’s brother.”

“The more shame for him to be lookin’ so horrid unnatural then!—I must take to my old misthiss now, Miss Quinny O’Toole! bother her!—How *furious* she stared at the feather!—wasn’t her countenance red as a radish!—an’ I like a rap* in a poor-box, so ’shamed o’ *meeself*!—to be cowed by a woman before all our people!—translated to stone with my tongue in my throath! ’twill choke us!—*You’re* as down at the mouth as dumb Dicky Donovan, Sir,”

“But why are you lodged in that tub?”

“I can always think best in the dark, Sir—I didn’t pop in to shirk Miss Quinilla at any

* Rap.—A bad half-penny.

rate—Pooh ! we don't care a whistle for her—there's worse luck than that—her Baronship's going !”

“ Going !”

“ ’Tisn't likely the face o' Miss Quin would entice her to stay.—The blessin' o' the blind, an' the lame, an' the starvin', and sick, be her shield from bad luck !”

“ Do you mean that she leaves us to-morrow ?”

“ I'm off for the carriage at day-break. The Geraldine gave me my orders, an' a message for you, Sir, wrapped up in this scrap of a note—'tis a merry come sorrow—but there must be a blister for every back.”

I made a brave struggle to keep down my grief.

“ An' what will become o' my mother without her *Frowleen* ? we'd hang ourselves but for the sin of it—Good night Sir—I must pack up her boxes. But where will the Misthiss stow the Squireen, Sir ?”

I explained, commending to Katy the care of our visitor's bedding.

“ I'll bring him a blanket myself, and a bit

of a glass to be viewing his beautiful phiz," cried Slauveen, with alacrity—we'll give him a lift in any man's house but the master's."

I turned from him into the ruin, ánd Slauveen pursued his way, disturbing the night with '*Dholinshin cruskeen lawn.*' I stretched myself upon a mat beneath the minstrel's canopy, and was asleep before the song had ceased.

The compounds of my dreams were wedding pranks and city routs.—I, who had never danced before, capered like one bewitched at the McCarthy drum with the McCarthy heir-ess, while two fiddles and a dulcimer, Conlan and blind Johnny, struck up a horrid *mélée* of discordant tunes, through which *the dusty miller* was predominant. The mutations of my partner were miraculous; she changed into a Friesland hen, and then into a monstrous owl, *I* still performiug my coranto, while the waddling biped whisked round and round, pursuing me with ardour, and the male O'Toole, dressed in a jacket and petticoat, clapped with all his might—*Moneemia* in a dock-tailed coat and crowned with a smart cockade, assailed me next. Wondering at my 'light, fantastic toe' I shuff-

led and cut with all the ease in life, while transformation went on rapidly—My partner was now a horned bullock careering on his hinder legs, and now a lion with a fiery tail lashing the floor outrageously.

At length 'the spirit of my dream was changed'; my limping gait returned; I was shrivelled to a Leprechan and corked up in a bottle of punch.

The clam of consternation bedewed my brow when I awoke.—where was I?—The dazzling glare from '*real wax candles*' faded into a dim uncertain light—I raised myself upon my elbows—my unblinking gaze took in a monster, a substantial monster, hideous as my unreal tormentors—it was Theodore O Toole in a dirty night cap and a comfortable doze, enveloped in blankets and delicately bolstered. The glimmering dawn was still less lenient to his charms than gairish sun-light; the whole fairy tribe could have sported in his cavern of a mouth or played bo-peep in the dilated tunnels of a proboscis which gave premonitory note that its owner might be tickled by the goblins

with impunity. I cautiously arose, and perceived Fielding, wrapped in his cloak, pillowed by a mat, stretched near the window, and profoundly sleeping; his valise, with scattered books and papers, lay beside him—"Did nature employ the same journeyman to form this man and that?" thought I.

The encreasing light made my "scrap of a note" now legible. It contained but a line—"You will meet the Baroness at Grace Mc Quillan's cottage before breakfast." I hastily descended to the lake and braced myself for the uphill ramble by a genial dip.

Theodore might have found in the pellucid waters a more faithful mirror than that with which Katy had provided him: the hue and shape of shell and pebble were distinguishable, and the pendulous spikelets of the cotton grass which fringed the little isthmus seemed bathing, like myself, in crystal depths: vapours were steaming from the fissures, but the Eastern sky was clear and tinted with vermillion. I had crossed the causeway just as a horizontal ray from the newly risen sun, fell like a fillet of

gold upon the monarch mountain of our glen, irradiating the summit. An eagle wheeled silently round and round the peak, as if rejoicing in the glory poured upon his dwelling-place; while a venerable goat, perched upon a nether ledge, seemed observant as myself of these devotional gyrations. Gradually the inspiring beams slanted to the headland, lighting up lake and tree, and bronzing the time-blackened arches of the ruin. Our quiet little homestead, shadowed by its hill ramparts, was but partially fleckered when I rounded the gap. The universal silence would have led me to think that the inmates were still sleeping off the yester eve's frolic, but that my sister's window was open, and a vapour, struggling through the cone which adorned our chimney, evinced that Katy was coaxing her embers. A few of the senseless stragglers of the previous morn now drowsily stalked from the byre. Till then I had bravely kept down the "merry come sorrow," but the sight of the duck pond opened the sluices of grief—how many, many days must intervene before Lanty could perpetrate such

another immersion, before our cousin again should depart for the Bullocks—"May Sanford fall deeper and deeper in love!"—The cock's shrill trumpet cut short my invocation.

I took a circuitous bridle-path which led to the sheeling, summing up Quinny's attractions—There was certainly something uncommon about her—so said my aunt. If *my* taste was not suited to this kind of "uncommon," why *my* taste must be false. She was fluent we knew, and *tip-top* by suffrage of all the *first* people in Cork. She had a wonderful knack at adornment Katy declared; and could vary the same piece of fustian into cardinal, joseph, or jacket and petticoat: to the wife of an artist this gift was a fortune, a ware-room in which he might choose picture-costumes.

The fall of a hoof, cautious and sure, dis-severed the links of Quinilla's perfections. The path was narrow, so I sat down on a crag, and prudently drew up my legs, conscious that the tramp belonged to gruff Lanty Maw. Lanty's long head soon appeared, warily no-

ting the steep sinuosities : his rider was trolling, *ad libitum*, a song he had parodied :—

Sure one woman's tongue,
Like a sheep-skin well strung,
Might draw a whole nation
together, together !

No drum ever sounded
A peal so confounded,
As rolls from a two-legged
belwether, belwether !

He espied me and halted—" 'Tis a pass with a vengeance, an' a pretty pass to, you are come to, you garron, to be leavin' your betters make way for you !—are you takin' the wall of young Geraldine, Lanty !" He dismounted.—" A cool day to you sir, an' a quiet one—there's some things more likely than that though."

" Not yet on your journey Slauveen !"

" Could I go without wishin' *her* well through the desolate sea ?" he replied, applying the back of his hand to his eyes—" a quiet-grained loving *Frowleen*. What a villain I was to make game of her !"

" Is Berga sorry to leave us ?"

“Cryin’ her stiff little eyes out! they’ll never be fixed upon me any more; I’m bothered betwixt her and her Baronship”—Slauveen raised his hat, a ceremony he always observed when he named Madame Wallenberg. “My heart howls like a death-bell; wisha then if it was howlin’ for cross-grained Miss Quin! a buryin’ her or marryin’ her, ’tis all one to Slauveen.”—He went on soliloquizing and guiding his steed through the pass—“But for Maw and my mother, my master an’ misthiss, Miss Marion, Katy Mulligan, the lads, an’ Miss Helen, I’d be off with her Baronship so I would.”—The lament was drowned in the drone of a bee.

My cloudy and lively forecastings struggled awhile, but the melancholy ones had the mastery. I resumed the path, vainly endeavouring to lure back Quinilla’s merits; the whole train had decamped, and I mounted the upland, moodful of departed quiet and departing friends. The merry song of the rivulet, issuing from the hill-tarn and briskly accompanying my lagging steps, sounded a comment on my

tardiness. I hastened forward and soon beheld the bonny witch of Carrig-a-Phooka, standing at her hospitable wicket, and issuing her welcomes far above the voice of the waterfall. The sheeling wore its usual inviting aspect—The sun-rays fell lovingly upon a breakfast that might have sated the ravenous Apicius—cream, meal-porridge, platters of eggs and honey, sugar in *chany* basin, and coffee in a pipkin for her Baronship, and piles of buttered oat-cake, that well nigh served for pillars to the rafters. On one of these luscious columns were fixed the eyes of the *Fräulein*, as if lamenting its approaches to consumption, while Granny's looks, now bright, now watery, were roving into every nook, in search of something to arrange. The fire blaze was blinking in the polished kettle-lid, still 'twould look *the better for a rub*—there were creases to be smoothed in the table-cloth—the hearth was swept so often that puss, for vengeance, clawed the brush which so disturbed her latitude—the only seat that had a back was placed where its occupant might enjoy the scenery; a mug

of wild flowers was transported from the dresser to the window ledge.

Berga, meanwhile, sat moveless as the rock, after the first grand effort she had made to bid *Herr Walter* a *gut morgen*. I had read of some gymnosophists who hoped to win beatitude by a life-long changeless stare. It now occurred to me that Berga had vowed some such penitentiary atonement to her martyred Patagonian. There was to-day, however, a purple tinge around the lids and a liquid glitter in the orbs themselves, not customary—something like a child's tear that stole into the heart, more impressive than the wildest sob. It deprived me of my relish for the dainties I had yearned towards, though Grace, through all her housewifely anxieties, energetically exhorted me to swallow, just a mouthful, to keep the appetite alive.

My uncle and the Baroness entered as the finishing rub was given to the kettle-lid. Berga made a reverential stand, but never moved her eyes from the oat-cake obelisk. Grace was in an agony of grief and hospitality ;

lamenting the approaching separation, and helping Madame Wallenberg to as much food as would have surfeited two stalworth retainers of her noble house; then, mindful of her *distance*, she retired to the inner room with the *Fräulein*. My uncle had breakfasted, or else was ill-disposed to honor Grace's viands; he was too abstracted to control the craving instinct which led him to a book; in a moment he was installed with Bunyan on the settle, and puss upon his shoulder amicably purring. The Baroness informed me she had left her worthy hostess thus early, to prevent the intrusion of *those people* upon the most painful adieu she had ever made—"One alone excepted," she added, sighing deeply—"This life's travelling gauze will sometimes blow aside Walter, notwithstanding our efforts to make light of the irremediable; but remember I have a journey to perform—we must not disappoint our lavish entertainer."

The edge of my appetite was blunted. I pictured our to-morrow—Quimilla filling the Baroness's chair—the brother-Toole and all his

ancestors—a second series of city chronicles—a second night of dansomania. The shapings of my fancy were revolting—for consummate breeding and courtly elegance, consummate rudeness and dull clack!—for the soul-elevating notice of such a woman as Madame Wallenberg, taunts, sneers, and nervous headaches! I made a mighty effort to philosophize, to eat without being choked: lest my tears should be detected, I stammered something of apology, and followed Grace and the *Fräulein*.—Here I had companions to countenance my grief—Berga's noiseless sorrow was the most expressive; faithful to her text, she had fixed upon a gazing-mark, the hook that sustained a choke-full cauldron, in which simmered a regale prepared for the aged of the glen by order of the Baroness. Grace had flung one arm round Berga's waist, and, from sympathy perhaps, was gazing in the same direction through a shower of tears. The *Fräulein* regarded me not, neither seemed she conscious of my presence, for in a mixed language, she entreated her *lieber guten freund* to

keep shut-lip upon the *sorrow-tale* she had related, for no *gut* thing would come of telling it. Grace's warranty for silence was given in her own sweet vernacular, attested by a hearty hug. Berga responded with a gentler pressure, and a *fahre-hin** pathetically reiterated, while Granny soothed and sobbed, bemoaning the scores of happy cosherings she and her *cushla-gra*, her little foreign fairy, had enjoyed together.

A beckon from Madame Wallenberg drew me from these unsophisticated friends. The Baroness was alone ; my uncle had transferred himself to the witch's tribune outside the hut ; the low parapet which hedged in the little tenement serving for a reading desk.

"I was anxious for this opportunity of speaking to you," said Madame Wallenberg, almost in a whisper—She looked at me fixedly—"You and your sisters, Walter, recall to me the forms of happy years, shadows of a solemn phantom-land, those I most loved and those

* *Fahre-hin*. — Farewell.

I most—"—She stopped abruptly, and after a pause resumed—"I must banish harsh feeling from this last interview."

"Last interview!" I repeated.

"Even so Walter; the tenser nerves snap soonest. Let me however speak to my purpose. You have a right to my protection; you have a right to claim it; therefore when I tell you that I am ready to satisfy on the instant any lurking inclination you may feel to enter a more ambitious course, I only promise that to which you are entitled.—You must not interrupt me—Is there any profession to which your wishes point? There are seminaries in your native country or in Germany to qualify students of your age for high distinction. Answer me without reserve—Are you desirous of emerging from obscurity?—would you leave your mountain home?"

I stood aghast; all the collective horrors of display upon a noisy and contentious theatre, of entering a literary curriculum, of vying with the graceful and distinguished, crowded to my brain,—I—halting—trembling—leave my

mountain glens! mine own dear home! the loves and friendships of my boyhood!—Conception rose quicker than utterance—I was in the porch, in the academy—I was exalted in the Forum, and “conscript fathers” on my tongue. But my tongue had cleaved unto my palate; I felt as many pangs as I had figured subjects of unconquerable repugnance and regret. Madame Wallenberg’s suggestion wore the form of advice—dared I dissent?—If my face was my mind’s index it must have looked a doleful face!

The Baroness smiled. “You will climb but by one path Walter; thorny, steep, and rocky, but still a *witching* path; you will abide with your cordial, joyous people. Do not look so heart-stricken—I proffered my assistance not my counsel.”

“You are not then offended,” stammered L.

“We are seldom offended by the dumb,” she replied—“It is not your fault that your countenance is honest. I neither applaud nor condemn your resolve; I dare not. One might

error has lowered my self-reliance. Governed by weak compassion I once cancelled an interdict which I considered harsh, shutting my eyes to consequences multiplied as if in warning, and appealingly invariable. The rebuke was awful!—Ought I to interfere a second time?”

This speech was uttered rapidly; the conclusion seemed to appeal to her own judgment rather than to mine; therefore I did not feel called on to reply.

After a pause the Baroness resumed—“Those who have erred as I have done should doubt their capability of judging rightly. With your character, with companions so unworldly, so enthusiastic in nature’s imagery, a fancy-sketch of public life must be revolting—I was prepared for your decision—There are circumstances too, which incline the balance in its favor, and yet—and yet you are too young perhaps to pronounce at once upon your future course—Your uncle’s resources may be ample, or they may be proportioned only to his actual position.—Are you aware that he once ranked high as

Baron Wallenberg? his retirement is as much of choice as of necessity, I do believe, because he says so, and his word is questionless; but one cannot discuss pecuniary affairs with such a man; therefore I address myself to you. I would not wound your best affections, but I would suggest that the opinions cherished at seventeen may be condemned at seven and twenty; even these mountains may change to prison-walls if found to be life's boundary—That flush denies the imputation, and asserts your devotion to your early benefactors; but mine is the age of disenchantment Walter; like you I once thought I never should repent of acting upon impulses I considered meritorious; had I pondered on those impulses the sterner sentiment of justice would have detected selfishness veiled by generosity."

I struggled to give my thoughts utterance, but a stubborn impediment obstructed their deliverance; I could only falter, "You mistake; I do not pretend to generosity—I do not pretend that it is gratitude to friends which dictates my decision—none but the kind and the

indulgent could care any thing for me ;—the world has no friends for the timorous and deformed."

"Many a gentle mind dwells in deformed tabernacle," said Madame Wallenberg—such as you are, I would present you as my son without a blush ; but remember I do not urge you to this world from which you are at present so averse—I would only provide for a change in your opinions—Should such a change take place and Madame Wallenberg be dead, apply to Baron Derentsi—my son is honorable and high minded—Take this medallion ; Derentsi will perceive how much his mother valued you, when she made you the depositary of a memorial so beloved. Your sisters need not know the subject of our conference ; recollect that he who would preserve a secret should not discover that he possesses one."—She put the medallion into my hand, and turning from me hastily summoned Berga and my uncle—I was not prepared for her abrupt—"farewell, farewell!"

My heart was swelling with a host of sad adieus.—The trio were slowly and separately

winding down the little footpath, and still articulation was impeded ; I could only wave my hand, while Grace, who stood beside me on the threshold gazing after Berga and her mistress, sobbingly ejaculated—" May you never hide yourself but where the houseless and the fatherless may find you !"

CHAPTER XIV.

" While as I ruminato
On my untoward fate,
Scarcely seem I
Alone sufficiently,
Black thoughts continually
Crowding my privacy."

I returned to the ruin to pore over my tribulations. The sombre walls were suited to my tone of mind, and the cawing of the rooks treasured less upon my reveries than the euphonious cackling of Quinilla. The old oak chamber was abandoned to 'solitude and me': I longed to become the exclusive tenant of its loneliness, to turn out my partner's sleeping furniture, the couch on which his tender limbs had rested, his toilet-shelf of noxious lotions, and all his trumpery adornments. Even Fielding's vallise

was an unwelcome earnest of its owner's proximity ; it augured a further encroachment upon my settlement, irksome to my present mood. I groped about for some unnoticeable corner, in which I might pine and mope to my content, and at length recollected that a closet behind the minstrel's throne was suitable for my purpose. Marion had hidden the dilapidated door with a canopy of laurel boughs and a faded curtain which had served for drapery. This inner chamber was some steps above the outer room, and might have been a cabinet or oratory. There were shelves and niches, once filled perhaps with folios and graven images. My entrance put to flight a flock of crows which had been comfortably roosting on the transverse bar of a loophole near the roof, for years appropriated by the sable brood, and black as their own polished coats. The ejected band kept up a long and lusty croak.— I felt stricken by a vague remorse at thus molesting their ancient dormitory—"Ye were attached to the deserted place," thought I ; "tenants by time's suffrage, and I have driven ye forth, to nestle beneath unfamiliar eaves."

My new lodgement, after a little labour, looked pleasanter than the oak chamber. I removed the lumber from the niches, and mounted on a window-seat to fling it into the bay. This brought about two notable discoveries; a bulwark of ivy clinging to the stone-shafted casement, grappling the old wall to its base and descendable as a ladder; and a crypt in the window-seat; the latter according to the Elizabethan fashion of architectural arrangement being hollow, with hinges to the lid. By the tough fibres of the ivy I could, riskless of neck or limb, alight upon a mole which ramparted the South side of the ruin, and thus decamp at my convenience, without disturbing the toilet-orgies of O'Toole. The window-seat would conceal my diary &c.

I now drew forth the medallion and pressed my finger on a spring; it opened, and disclosed the portrait of a female.—For a moment I imagined that Marion must have been the artist's theme, but a dark transparent veil overhanging the brow gave a gloomy expression to the countenance which lessened the resemblance; still it was strong enough to bear out the conclusion

that the features were Julia Derentsi's, and it instantly occurred to me that the Baroness had chosen this indirect method of presenting me with my mother's picture. The finger of a master artist was discernible, one who had sketched in fancy ere he touched the ivory, the image of a maid foredoomed. A strange horror crept on me; I hastily shut the case, and to detach my thoughts from the portrait, I began to meditate on my recent interview with the Baroness.

But even when I had minuted our conversation in my note-book I saw no clearer through the mystery which had so long embarrassed me. Conjecture served at least to divert the grief which, even in its mitigated form, I dared not subject to Quinilla's ridicule. I looked around my rookery with the elation that Sancho might have felt when he surveyed the Isle of Barataria, intending to adopt it as my chamber of refuge until our cousin should bless young Sanford with herself, or should return to the Bullocks. From contrast with Madame Walenberg she was more intolerable than ever. The male annoyance was quite as insupportable,

and I reflected on the scarcity of cottage room with satisfaction, as it furnished an excuse for avoiding these duplicate tormentors.

It was not until I had made every possible arrangement for escaping nightly collision with O'Toole that I recollected the departure of Madame Wallenberg, which had put Quiniffa in possession of her apartment at the cottage, would put me in possession of mine. This sequence, so stupidly overlooked, confounded me. I stared around my safety-valve with an obtuse sensation of regret. Heavy footsteps approached; I had barely presence of mind to replace the curtain when Theodore O'Toole Esquire, was heard apostrophizing his habiliments—"You're a nice pair of splatterdashes upon my conscience, so you are! after the sousing you got in that confounded pool—'tis well I wasn't drowned in it myself for good and all!—Couldn't those girls tell one the stones were slippery? My pantaloons dished into the bargain!—cost one pound ten without the buttons; and where the plague am I to get another pair?—Not a single *cheer* to hang um on!—Deuce a stay I'll stay if they don't put

me in a decent room—no, nor the deuce a bit o' me will for all the weddings in the world!—Here's a *poor*ty den for a gentleman to dress in!"

Thus seeming to go through the process of his toilet he kept up a pathetic grumbling, while I, astraddle on the closet window-ledge, contemplated the venture of swinging downwards by the ivy. As I paused upon the matter, a boat, steered by Fielding approached the mole. Sanford and Quinilla were seated in the stern. To avoid espial I drew back; the party landed; Fielding entered the ruin, and the lovers strolled arm in arm along the mole. Thus was my escape through the window obstructed; and I was inconceivably averse from betraying my port of refuge by issuing through the curtain. There was no resource; I was compelled to overhear the sputterings of O'Toole, now however interrupted by the voice of Fielding, who made an exclamation and laughed.

"You'd laugh at the wrong side of your mouth I'll engage, if you flumped in cold water up to the knees of the best pair of trowsers you had," said O'Toole—"cost every stiver of

one pound ten shillings besides the new buttons!—If I put on my peach-colored shorts the least spot o' *grace* will bedevil um!"

"You have only ten minutes to make up your mind," said Fielding: "my toilet is soon completed: your sister requested we should not be late.

"And where is *Quinilla*?" growled Theodore—
—"She promised to change these Hottentot dinner hours—How crumpled your collar looks!—
—A *vallise* is the ruination o' coats!"

"Miss O'Toole is with Sanford; they wait for us."

"Sanford!—a shilly-shally shabroon!—How yellow a man looks in this glass!—'tis cracked in the middle—he sha'nt philander with my sister though—You're a bad hand at brushing a coat my good fellow!—why you'll ruin the nap—can he make a fit settlement?—if he dares to say no, by the blessing o' Moses I'll *mollify* him!"

"Do you believe that he means to marry your sister?"

"*Manes*! by all manner o' *manes*! I'll *mollify* his *manes* if he don't!—Marry her!—Just lend me the loan o' your clothes-brush—

Marry her!—what else does he *mane*? I'll philander him!—There's but one way of bowing to Irishmen's sisters—Marry her—I like that indeed!—cotton stockings destroy a man's legs;—*we'll* teach him to *lave* off bamboozling a girl o' quality."

"You had better make haste," observed Fielding.

"I will with a bludgeon o' black-thorn, and so you may tell him—where the plague is my knee-buckle?—make haste?—to be sure I'll make haste."

"I mean to your dinner," said Fielding.

"Just stop a moment; how is my hair? *will* you lend me a white pocket handkerchief."

They departed: I rejoiced that nothing had passed which might have compelled me to shew myself: they had made no allusion to me or to any one dear to me: as for Quinilla, she was provided I found, to my boundless astonishment, with a doughty defender. This twig of the valiant O'Tooles rose prodigiously high in my estimate; and to forward the consummation his interference with Sanford promised, I determined to remain in my present establish-

ment, and resign in his favor my room at the cottage.

Time had unconsciously flown ; it was dinner hour, but I was covered with cobweb and dust ; a flickering horror of our cousin and the *company* kept hunger at bay ; the family would conclude I had remained at the sheeling, and until Grace's supper hour I had plenty of work in arranging my rookery.

The curtain had been so disposed behind the throne, that no unscrutinizing visitor could suspect there was a room beyond it. I restored my sleeping mat to the oak chamber, and a little more exertion made me Lord of another library ; it only wanted books, and these I could procure while Quinilla was pursuing a quarry, more important. It struck me that the actual moment was propitious—dinner would engage the cottage party—I could creep in at the study window, and abstract a tome or two without detection. This adventure was entered on without delay ; the study was attained with little difficulty ; there was no necessity for stealthy pace or tip-toe ; I could have marched away, unheard, with a troop of

ancients, the clang of tongues and laughter in the adjoining room was so predominant. I felt indignant—How could my sisters join in such idle mirth?—Was Madame Wallenberg so soon forgotten? Fearful of detection and impatient to escape the uncongenial noise, I stuffed book after book into my pocket.

“Where on earth is Walter?” cried Quinilla, —“noozled in some cranny, I’ll engage—’twill be good fun to ferret him—we’ll ransack his auger-holes after dinner, Mr. Sanford—He’ll redden up like fire, and stare at us like any thing!”

“Let the poor boy alone,” exclaimed my aunt.

“Oh! I’m resolved to find him out and quiz him dreadfully. What a hurry his old ladyship went off in!”

Here her voice was exalted into a shriek of laughter, during which, having finished my lading, I stole off.

Myself and freight were safe outside the window when I recollected that my precious memoranda were in my sleeping-room—I could not ensure their hiding place against Quinilla’s

ransacking propensity, and I was more than ever bent on surrendering my apartment to her brother—The hall door was open; our little staircase, reached by a single step, was opposite; the parlour, alias dining-room, on one side; the kitchen on the other—Katy was frying pancakes, the perfume of which was all I could regale on, for a peep informed me that Katy's head-gear was awry, an indicative sign that her temper wanted tuning—I stole upstairs, (the clang of plates protecting me) and hastily secured my diary and inkhorn—Quinny's scarlet habit, pendent from my hat-pin, made me bounce into the landing; a door abruptly opened; Marion's head was put forth, and Helen's was peeping over Marion's shoulder: both the sweet faces bore the trace of tears.

“ ’Tis Walter!” they ejaculated.

“ Hush, hush!” cried I; “ Quinilla will be on us.”

They drew me into their little chamber and closed the door—“ We feared you were gone with my uncle,” said Helen—I questioned her and found that my uncle had determined on accompanying Madame Wallenberg to the place

of embarkation; that he had also business with his agent in Cork, and might not return for two or three weeks; Slauveen had attended him.

"And why are you not at dinner?" I enquired.

"Dinner!" echoed Helen; "we are too full of tears to eat—what a change from yesterday!"

"The hearts of the whole glen are breaking for the Baroness," said Marion.—"Kitty Driscoll has been here; there was not a dry eye at the feast; blind Johnny put his share into his wallet.—'Tis too much Walter—the Baroness to leave us and Quinilla to come back all at once!—a day's preparation would have made us more resigned."

"And those young men," said Helen; "I wish she had not brought them; mirth, when one is sad, makes one feel sadder."

"I could quarrel with the sunshine," rejoined Marion—"I drove away the birds.—Shall we ever be as glad as we were yesterday?"

"Madame Wallenberg may visit us again," said Helen.

"And Quinilla may marry that young man," said Marion—"although Mr. Sanford told me,"

she continued, "that but for his friend he would not have gone back to Mrs. Bullock's. They left Quinilla there, and went to sketch the Giant's causeway; when they returned to Cork it was Mr. Fielding who thought first of our cousin. Then they got acquainted with that foolish Mr. Theodore O'Toole, who persuaded them to stay for the Bullock fancy-ball. Mr. Sanford said his escorting Quinilla to the glen was accidental—but he might have said that to hide his love for her; William Driscoll couldn't bear to let the people know he was in love with Kitty."

"My aunt told me that Quinilla consulted her this morning about wedding clothes," said Helen. "Mr. O'Toole remains to give away the bride."

"Oh! don't be too sanguine, Helen—disappointment would break my heart!" cried Marion. "I could laugh again, I think, if once the wedding-day were fixed. We were happy, you know, even without Madame Wallenberg, when my cousin was away."

Helen's information somewhat cheered us. We discoursed on the probabilities of Quinilla's

marriage and change of residence, for all three decided she would certainly prefer living near the Bullocks. The sisters then discussed the *pour et contre* of Madame Wallenberg's return, Marion gravely suggesting the possibility of the Baron's dying soon, and promising to ask our aunt how old he was.

These topics duly canvassed we found spirits to enter on more trivial matters; I imparted my intention of resigning my chamber to O'Toole, and we were again entering on the subject of our hopes when my aunt's dinner peroration sounded—"Katy take away." I hastily embraced my sisters: they looked so dejected that I determined, from the morrow out, to battle with my selfishness, to give up my retreat till night-fall, and manfully to share with them the brunt of day-long clamour.

END OF VOL. I.

Printed by T. C. Newby, Bury.

THE INTERDICT.



VOL. II.

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THE INTERDICT ;

A NOVEL.

*" Be thou, my soul, the destin'd period wait,
When God shall solve the dark decrees of fate ;
His now unequal dispensations clear,
And make all wise and beautiful appear."*

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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THE INTERDICT.

CHAPTER I.

“ For still she sang near brae and burn,
How sweet’s the love that meets return !”

A week passed heavily—the quiet of our home was gone ; it did not look like home.

In voluntarily exposing myself to the arrows of Quinilla, I thought myself more valiant than the son of Peleus ; but I longed for moonlight as much as any owl, and caught myself, the third day, while yet the sun was in meridian, instinctively wending to the ruin. I turned my recreant feet and performed penance by offer-

ing to shew Theodore the beauties of the glen ; but Theodore had little taste for other beauties than his own, and could not, for the tenderness he bore his pantaloons, and hessian boots, venture them through copse or pebbly rill : he had, besides, a paternal care for his complexion, and eschewed a sun-beam as if fraught with pestilence. His prowess consequently dwindled in my estimate to a mere dribble. Would one so careful of his skin abide the perforation of a bullet?—I soon discovered that he thought his *cicerone* a confounded bore, and I rejoiced thereat ; my conscience was appeased ; the hours I would have squandered on him for my aunt's sake, were now, honestly, my own—I spent them at the ruin.

Quinilla, on the contrary, was by a *coup d'amour* affected with a passion for the beauties of creation. She, who had once been as tender of apparel as her brother, now trudged “ from morn till dewy eve ” through bog and furze-brake, in yellow boots and pink silk stockings, careless of her garments as if they grew upon her back as kindly as the ram's wool. This was Katy's commentary—it angered Mrs. Mul-

ligan, indeed, to see the fragments of the beautiful book-muslin petticoat floating from the thorn bushes, and the elegant lace veil reduced to riddles.

These audible complaints might be esteemed impertinent by those unadvised of Ireland's domestic compact of immemorial date; a charter which guarantees freedom of tongue to fosterers and factotums of every grade; they would rather lose their *perquisites* than their licence to bestow advice and "a bit o' their minds," upon occasion. Frankness is, in fact, the staple of their fidelity; if they do not inflict, at their discretion, remonstrance or reproof, they do not care a farthing for you. They will keep the distance measured by themselves, inviolate—drive them half an inch beyond it, and you lose your hold on their affections. Katy knew her privilege, and stretched it to the limit: she was an old and faithful servant, a family fixture; she counted herself blood-relation to Quinilla, for she had nursed her; she joined my aunt in thinking her a beauty, and destined to accomplish a grand match; therefore she condemned this waste of

muslin and Mechlin on a tramping picture-lad, and would have reckoned it a *thousand shames* to have withheld her commentaries.

I, on the contrary, felt a real respect for the young artist as far as his profession went, which I justly ranked among the nobler callings. His nomadic life was only a proof of his enthusiasm. Apelles might have left his native isle to visit ours, had he but dreamed of its enchantments. Thus I endeavoured to satisfy my aunt, and to vindicate myself for encouraging Sanford's passion, which I doubted not led him daily to the very haunts Quinilla selected for her rambles. I used to watch them from my eyrie, rejoicing in their budding loves. Quinilla, sometimes indolently languishing would seize on Sanford's arm; sometimes innocently sportive would skip like a young kid, to the utter dislocation of "the beautiful book-muslin." My sisters, forced to countenance these appointments, would linger far behind, companions of the sensitive O'Toole, who during scorching noon, never ventured his complexion beyond the shady covert of the headland. In rainy weather our study was

converted into a reception room, and every one of our familiar places became in turn desecrated, for Quinilla now afflicted us with melody ! displaying her terrible proficiency in ballad and bravura. The wilderness where we had listened to the wood-pigeon resounded to —“ Sweet’s the love that meets return ”—our cousin’s voice, perforating a thousand brilliant passages, would glide from dulce to fortissimo, and wake the echoes, scare the pigs, and force the very frogs to leap out of their lurking holes, as it rattled forth “ Bright chanticleer.”—I never shall forget that horrid chanticleer !

Our aunt meantime, stifling her own doubts, intent on gratifying Quinilla, and deaf to Mrs. Mulligan’s misgivings, would task the skill of her factotum to vary the flavour of her standard dishes ; to make the pork and chicken of to-day unlike the chicken and pork of yesterday : there were no supplemental dainties to be had within a dozen miles—Mr. Sanford *must* be asked to dinner, else Quinilla would be *wild* ; and though the dog-days were blazing on our glen, when erst cold meat and salad would suffice us, yet frying pan and spit, now,

were cheated of their holiday, and (harder usage still,) a poor old dog named Breesthough, which turned the spit-wheel (chain jack and bottle jack being yet in embryo,)—I had a compassion for the forlorn turnspit, and, though no painter, I could make a graphic sketch of that mute, patient servitor—he was a lean and liver-colored animal, long backed and short upon his legs, the only sentient thing in our establishment unkindly forced to labour. He would erect himself upon his meagre haunches, fix his disconsolate round eyes on Mrs. Mulligan, and wag his paws imploringly. We used to intercede for him with tears, when skulking from the ominous fowl or joint which Katy had just spitted, he would take shelter between any legs that would protect him, looking so piteous at the prospect of his diurnal motion. But Katy was an obdurate task-mistress—she would seize poor Breesthough by the nape, call him deluding thief and humbugger, contend that he only wanted to be coaxed, that he had a liking for his wheel—He had I think the same affection for it that Ixion had for his,—It roused my ire to see poor Breesthough's

holiday curtailed by our unseasonable visitors—Philosophers may laugh when I confess that the melancholy whine which accompanied his noontide whirl has often brought the tears into my eyes—I one day thrust Pug into his place, at risk of being bitten, and hid poor Breesthough in the hay-loft. Mrs. Mulligan was furious, for Pug resigned his situation, and the meat was spoiled.

Another grievance at this season remains to be recorded. I was obliged to fill my uncle's post at dinner, and help the *company*, an office unsuitable to me as that of turnspit to Pug. I had to bear the acid of Quinilla's sulks, which fell upon my carving, when Sanford disappointed her ; and the sallies of her obstreperous humour when she thought herself adored. Sometimes, in these latter cases, she would, *sotto voce*, repeat to me his whispered flatteries.—I once expressed my wonder that while he spoke to her, he looked at Marion—Quinilla said, *that* was the delicate artifice of love, and I believed her.

Sanford, meanwhile, made friends on all sides ; he was free of every cabin in the glen

his light and fascinating audacity had introduced him.—With Marion's *protégés* he was particularly a favorite. Bill Driscoll liked him for his *genteel* behaviour in dancing with his wife. Blind Johnny listened with less pleasure to his pipes than to Sanford's rattle. The infant beggars knew whom to follow for a silver half-penny; even Katy Mulligan accorded him her patronage from the moment she discovered that he threw away his money like a gentleman, a sure sign, she said, he had a plenty.—My aunt thought otherwise, that light money leaves the pocket and heavy money fixes there—still she liked Sanford, and but for, now and then, a grumble at Fitzgerald's absence, her good humour was abundant as her hospitality—My sisters, too, tired of O'Toole's conceit and coarseness, would resign him to the *shades* and willingly accept the escort of their future cousin, as Quinilla called the lively artist.

But there was one whom Sanford never could propitiate—Grace McQuillan. Her keen brown eye would steadily take note of him, but never twinkle with a kind regard; her curtsy was ungraciously accorded, and to his friendly banter

she would oppose a gravity most disconcerting. She was oftener at the cottage now than heretofore, but her sparkling countenance was overcast. When Mrs. Mulligan would brag of Miss O'Toole's good fortune in marrying a man who made a power of money with nothing but a little brush and a black lead *skiver*, Grace would come in at every pause with an emphatic humph!—"Tis throwing cold water on the match," said Katy, "like blowing a fire with a broken-winded bellows."

All this time Fielding seemed neglectful or neglected: he seldom visited the cottage, and when he did he was formal, absent, and embarrassed—He was as niggardly of words as I was, and even with Sanford was laconic and reserved. One day my aunt remarking on his diffidence drew the following corollaries—that as he certainly was not as *free and easy* as his friend he must be poorer; this would account for his glum looks and his distasteful conduct—Quinnilla had declared that his attentions to herself were quite distressing, until she plainly told him that her heart was given to another—this would account for his low spirits—"And so

Walter," went on my aunt, "the poor fellow is greatly to be pitied you know: they tell me he shares your apartment at the ruin—a convenient thing for him.—I begged Katy to fit it up with all that we can spare to make him comfortable.—Give the creature a shelf in your clothes-press; his things are huddled into a vallise my brother says—and Walter, do tell him that his dining here makes no difference; the dumb waiter answers for Slauveen; Katy doesn't mind another plate or two, and the table set for seven will hold eight."

It was true that Fielding had continued to share my sleeping-chamber at the ruin, although his friend's head quarters were some miles off. I could not help observing that for fellow travellers they were unaccountably dissevered, unless indeed the cause could be discovered in their rivalry; but my musings on this source of variance always concluded with my wondering how the rest of mankind should differ so widely from myself in opinion of Quinilla.

I had met my fellow-lodger frequently upon the causeway, or wandering along the mole. Though joint tenants of the old oak chamber

we did not warm into intimacy—civil but silent co-partners. He seemed like myself to have a mortal antipathy to long sentences. Thus our acquaintanceship did not ripen kindly; nay, having reached to exchange of opinion on the weather, it seemed frost-nipped. But my aunt had now convinced me he was poor, and crossed in love. I would try to gloss the manner of her invitation. He was slow in receiving my advances, yet I persisted: "His pride," thought I, "only seeks to ward off obligations which he thinks derogatory."—I grew animated, and my tongue nobly seconded my earnestness.

Fielding looked at me with some surprise, as if he had all at once discovered in me the type of something rational.—Be it as it may, from that hour we were friends, and at times I have thought that all the sorrows of my after-years were counter-balanced by the friendship of such a man.

He was the disciple of a new philosophy—new at least to me.—Instead of interpreting nature, like *my* imaginative theorists, by devising causes consonant with their own conclusions, he exercised his reason in discovering those

•

causes, and in establishing their results.—His predominant characteristic was an independent, inquisitive, and penetrating sagacity, which led him to enquire minutely and boldly to decide—His wisdom was practical, operating to search out truth and recommend it ; to investigate the subtle element of mind, and to prove the harmonious adjustment of what is changeable and unchangeable in our sphere of action.—His cool and resolute courage enabled him to combat a susceptibility, tremblingly alive ; to withstand the sharpest trials ; to grapple with prejudice, assert the right, and fearlessly reject the false—His doctrine tended to raise the spirit to a calm supremacy above external influences, and to wield its resources as agents in the service of religion and philosophy. His morality was as practical as his wisdom ; it was tried by the more exalted tests, not caught at random from speculative principles.—Like the features of his countenance, the features of his mind were of the noble rather than of the captivating stamp ; in neither could you discover a trait to favor weakness or to palliate hypocrisy.

These observations of Fielding's character

were not hastily made—they are the result of long experience; during our early fellowship I could not discriminate between learning and wisdom; I was too ignorant and bigoted to give up my crude opinions and old theorists, and enter on the preliminary course of study Fielding advised me to pursue.—It would be the labour of a life, I thought, to acquire even the rudiments of his system: I hugged the dear old folios, my new counsellor would have banished, or at least suspended; and promised them eternal constancy—We differed however without disputing; our friendly controversies were the fruits of our encreasing intimacy. My courage in making a bold stroke to overcome a poor, proud man's fastidious scruples, was rewarded; the eighth place at table was filled by Fielding, and although the brother artists eyed each other at the first rencounter very like suspicious rivals, yet their aspect was in no way threatening, nay Sanford's handsome face lost in a moment all trace of discomposure, softening into an expression of arch defiance, consistent with the exultation of a successful candidate.

Helen had been present when my aunt expressed her surmises of Fielding's poverty, and had added an energetic "Do Walter persuade the poor man to join us at dinner." The shrinking, girlish, reserve which, combining with her grief for Madame Wallenberg, had made my sister almost mute in the company of Sanford and O'Toole, was dispelled by compassion for the dejected stranger. Those slight unostentatious services which only the refined can estimate were tendered by Helen to the humbler guest; the dumb waiter stood beside her, and Fielding was more scrupulously served than any one; yet her kindness was so modestly put forth that it required a tact as delicate as her own to comprehend it. Quinilla, hitherto, had been seated between me and Sanford, O'Toole between my sisters, but, on the day of Fielding's re-appearance at our board Sanford, by some shuffling, contrived to displace Theodore, who clucked and sputtered on finding himself "*hindered o' dividing the girls.*" I suffered innocently for this change-sides—Quinilla's visage glowed like a setting-sun; she let loose two worlds of words upon my awkward carving

—I grew nervous, spilled the gravy, and by a luckless slip of my fork sent a crackling of roast pork into our cousin's lap.—Her dress was spoiled!—a lavender poplin—and her dismay was horrible! I had a great mind to run off—Marion made bad worse by a sly laugh, at which I almost fainted. The cloud upon Quinilla's brow was charged. My aunt called out for Katy and cold water.—There was an appalling suspension of my cousin's breath: she glared upon the crackling, voiceless!

“What lovely equanimity!” cried Sanford—“admirable!—to look so unruffled, on so trying a catastrophe!”—He threw his handkerchief on the erratic crackling and flung both out of the window.—“A gentleman of my acquaintance,” he continued, coolly resuming his seat, “who was about to put on matrimonial shackles, tried the temper of his mistress by an *artificial accident* of this kind—the lady rated him as if they had been married for a month—she lost her lover and her dress; my friend is still a bachelor.”

“And served her right,” exclaimed Quinilla—“She must have been a mean-spirited irri-

table creature !—No woman with an atom of dignity would lose her temper for such trifles ! —*The*:, dear, do you remember the butter-boat that Dionysius Bullock upset upon my ball-dress ?—I was as cool then as I am now.—Don't fatigue yourself Helen ; the skirt is ruined, but what harm !—There, there, you'll rub it into a hole—Is that a spot upon the flounce too !"—She laughed—I thought it was the oddest laugh !

" Well," cried my aunt, " I give you credit sister ; " I never saw you bear vexations of the kind so well before.—Turn the breadth bottom upwards.—Eat your dinner Walter.—Mr. Sanford did you intend to throw your pocket handkerchief out of the window ?—was that an artificial accident ?"

" Hang your accidents of all sorts, natural and unnatural," cried O'Toole—" I hate um—Wasn't that a *poorty* accident that spoiled my purple pantaloons if you *plase* ! You remember Fielding the last time that you dined here, when I put on my peach-blossoms, and you and Sanford had the row.—We thought you'd never come again !"

"He took wit in his anger, you perceive," exclaimed Quinilla, pertly.

It was the first intimation I had had, that the rivals had actually quarrelled.

"I assure you," she resumed, "I consider it very ungenteel behaviour of you, Mr. Fielding, to worry Mr. Sanford so. If you are eager to be off, can't you go? Mr. Sanford is not tired of us yet!" She cast a knowing glance at the handsome artist.

"There are some features of this glen I would wish to impress upon my mind ineffaceably," said Sanford; "therefore I remain."

He looked so full at Marion that one might have suspected it was her features he alluded to.

"Is it the goblin's pass, or the petrified flood you mean?" said Marion, eagerly; "or is it that grand view which comes upon you all at once when you round O'Sullivan's crag? Or is it that rock above the fall where we gathered those heaths and sea pinks?"—he pointed to a *bush* of flowers, redolent and variegated, which hid the parlour grate.

"I have made a sketch of what has so enchanted me," said Sanford, carelessly; "you shall see it."

"And you *do* think Ireland beautiful!" said Marion.

"What a fool you are!" exclaimed O'Toole—"How should *you* know any thing of Ireland?—Why you never shewed your nose beyond this out o' the way hole!—God help your head! wait till you see Rathcormac, and the Bog of Allan, then you may talk!"

"The bog of Allan suits your poetic inspirations," said Sanford, "but I have only common-place ideas.—Where, Miss Fitzgerald is, to me appears the most delightful spot in Ireland, or any other land."

My aunt laughed, "I am so used to hear the children called Marion and Helen, that I could not at first make out who you meant by Miss Fitzgerald."

"*Children?*" cried O'Toole—"that's too much upon the brogue! what babes they are!—why Walter is *going on* seventeen, and he's the youngest, isn't he?"

"To be sure," replied my aunt; "younger

than his sisters by a year or two—sixteen, years younger than Quinilla.”

Theodore gave out so extraordinary a whistle that every body started.

“You are a little out in your reckoning sister,” said our cousin, who had been accustomed to make a modest deduction of at least six years from her experience.

“Let me see,” pursued my unconscious aunt—“this is the year one thousand eight hundred and fourteen; you were born in—”

“The room is very hot; I’m suffocated;” said Quinilla.

“Then we’ll leave it,” said my aunt. “Walter, say grace.”

Quinilla led the way into the study, apparently so exhausted that she was obliged to grasp at Sanford’s arm.

I had scarcely entered our little library since the memorable wedding-day, when I had read *Antigone* to Madame Wallenberg. The book lay open at the page which had called forth my aunt’s reprehensory ejaculation. Marion approached—“Ah! that was the last thing

you read to Madame Wallenberg ;” she sighed profoundly—“ shall we be as happy as before we knew the Baroness—when our cousin goes ? do you think we shall ?”

“ A difficult question to resolve,” I answered.

“ I cannot divine how we shall feel when all these noisy people go,” continued Marion ; “ there are but four, and yet they seem four hundred, Mr. Sanford may make Quinilla as good a husband as William Driscoll makes his wife, so ’tis no great harm to wish that they were married.”

“ William Driscoll,” I repeated ; “ did you observe the progress of that courtship ?”

“ Surely did we. Kitty used to assist Helen and me to teach our little weavers ; William was always lurking near the ruin ; Kitty held back, as if wishing to avoid him.”

“ And do you think this love-affair resembles that ?” I anxiously enquired.

“ Marion mused awhile, and cast a side glance round. Helen and Fielding were in deep discussion : Sanford was hemmed up in a corner guarded by Quinilla, who was pouring on her lover a flood of beautiful ideas. “ Do

you think *this* love affair resembles *that*?" I repeated.

"Exactly," whispered Marion; "only that it is Quinilla who plays the part of William Driscoll. I wish she would fix the wedding day, for I feel at times so unaccountably low-spirited. I would give any thing to wake one morning and find they were all gone."

"So would I; but Marion, do you think Quinilla is secure of Sanford's affection?"

"Oh! quite; she told my aunt he worried her to death with love, and squeezed her hand; I don't think much of that however, for he squeezed mine one day—he hurt me, and I told him so; but then he makes such speeches. She repeats them all to Helen."

"Do you think Sanford amiable?" said I.

"Every body thinks him so—don't you?—He bought a bag for Johnny's pipes—he gave William fishing-tackle for his boat—the children are all alive with joy when they meet him. And who was it that turned Quinilla's rage from you to-day? The only creature he seems cross to, is that spiteful pug; he flung it heels over

head into the duck pond because it snapped at me."

"Yet pug is Quinilla's pet," said I; "he should love the dog for her sake."

"I love Grace," retorted Marion; "yet I dislike her cat."

"Were you present when Sanford quarrelled with his friend?"

"No—Quinilla said it was from jealousy."

"And what would you infer from Sanford's jealousy, Marion?"

"That which we all wish for," she replied.

"Unless Quinilla marry we shall never get rid of her entirely. Hush! Mr. Sanford has escaped; he will join us in a moment."

I had no opportunity of enquiring how she had divined that Sanford would join us in a moment.

CHAPTER II.

“Haunt of my childhood art thou still as fair
As when I wandered through each green recess?
Still does the soft breeze, with his idle breath,
Stirring at once a thousand twinkling leaves.
Utter neglected music?”

THESE retrospective sketches of my early past have often proved emollients to the rough griefs of maturer years. I look through gloomy passages heartless and discouraged, until some record of days green and balmy meets my eye—a sun-ray striking unexpectedly through a dungeon grating. Oh, wise philosopher, who reckoned remembrances of childhood among wholesome things !

From the incubus pressure of the *toga virilis* I transport myself into my light jane jacket, and *noozle*, as Quinny called it, into each cranny of my boyish haunts. Even the recollected sorrows of those "merry days when we were young" are fever-cooling—soft showers, which refresh the flowers and brighten up the fields. The waves of thought, flow smoothly on, bearing me, joyous, to that blithe age when I began to recollect. I betake myself with new vigor to my desk whenever one of these welcome interludes comes forward.—This blotted note-leaf, peeping from larger sheets, represents me debating with Fielding in the old oak chamber, opposing a school-boy's logic to his acute, inductive reasoning. I felt the superiority of his principles, but I obstinately repelled conviction, and adhered to that philosophy which, instead of studying nature, was satisfied to guess at it.

Yet no unkindly feeling was excited by our differences. With Fielding my prejudices and weaknesses were added causes for interest and compassion; while I, secretly impressed with reverence for his genius, denied his proposi-

tions, partly from indolence, and partly from attachment to the far-fetches in which I had been disciplined.

But there was one among us who seemed his twin spirit, the substratum of whose mind appeared to have been cast in the same mould. Helen's intellect was expansive: there was a spring and energy about her, indepressible; and a clearness of conception by which she quickly recognized as beautiful and convincing, the mental expositions of our new acquaintance. Her countenance glowed with animation when Fielding would revive before her, our unequal contests. Kindling with his theme he would leave me to my crudities, and enter on the harmonies of nature. The various aspects of the external world, the various aspects of the human mind, their accordance with each other and with *beneficent* arrangement, became to Helen gradually intelligible; her course of reading had been wholesomer than mine, and had better schooled her for the admission of truth. There was no egotism of preconceived opinion to mystify the light of reason, neither was there any educational frippery, misnamed

accomplishment, to obstruct the progress of good sense. At first she was merely an attentive listener, attentive through anxiety to prevent the humble stranger from feeling himself overlooked; but she soon became a questioner, and succeeding days strengthened her faith in our philosopher.

Fielding's moral doctrine exhibited in all its phases perfect symmetry: in its application he evinced deep knowledge of the human mind.— Pure enjoyment was derivable from the due exercise of our higher faculties; the lower, when discreetly used, stimulated the nobler, and contributed also their meed of minor satisfactions. Our vices were ordained to be destructive of ourselves, our virtues the sources of internal peace. To err morally was to court remorse, more or less pungent according to the nature of our sentiments; to transgress physically was to incur penalties proportioned to the infraction of those invariable laws by which the universe is guided and sustained. Thus even prudence or expediency was made to subserve a high-toned morality, an exalted and unshakable belief in the beneficence of the almighty

Legislator. The accordance of this divine government with those exalted precepts, was pointed out, in which the humblest yet the ablest teacher appeals to our nobler principles against the tyranny of self-love, avarice, and hypocrisy; thus demonstrating the capability of man to render these distempered passions subordinate to his higher attributes. Submission was enjoined to dispensations which, fallaciously considered, might appear irreconcilable with benevolence, and obedience was prescribed to those natural laws whose operations no entreaty can suspend. Ignorance was no plea for the infringement of such ordinances; innocence could not mitigate the punishment annexed: the fiat had gone forth which had established 'they were good' and therefore irreversible. Thus was the study of ourselves and of the edicts on whose observance a futurity of pain or satisfaction hangs, imperative. We were not to question the will of the great Designer, as manifested in such appointments; we were patiently to conform to His decrees. Death, the decay of faculties, their failure when abused, evils hereditary or inherent, were the conse-

quences of a state of being in which we should progress, until the ends of Omnipotence were accomplished.

There was yet another member of our little household whose unpretentious, plain good sense had predisposed her to the views of this genuine philanthropist. My aunt's stocking-needle remained suspended while Fielding spoke. At first her honest countenance was only significant of wonder that her poor guest and his embarrassment should have parted company. The matter must be next to inspiration, she protested, that could thus have loosed his tongue. She regarded him with that sort of dread Warlocks are supposed to have created, an open-mouthed ambiguous stare; but her features after a time would relax into profound attention, interrupted by commendatory phrases fashioned in her homely style—'to be sure—I said so myself a thousand times—goodness is no excuse for want of prudence—there's one infliction for breach of the commandments, another for offences against common sense—a man may be an honest man yet break his neck—the vilest rogue on earth

may have the sense to keep upon the safety side—if people run their noses into ruin with their eyes wide open, be they ever so pious, they must reap the consequences; but let them lay it to their own misconduct, not to Providence—I always thought it downright arrogant, for vain, self-righteous mortals to pretend, that the punishment of rashness is a measure of divine grace to their conceited selves, and a just judgment upon those they think less worthy of such chastening favors—who made them judges in a christian-land?—all very well among the Pharisees.’

“You speak with reference to the consequences of our known transgressions,” observed Helen, who, with myself and aunt, formed the audience of our lecturer one memorable morning; “but surely there are unavoidable evils—may not such calamities, Mr. Fielding, become beneficial as correctives, to ameliorate the spirit of the sufferer and lead the mind to Heaven?”

“Every misfortune, submissively interpreted, may become so, but to boast of misfortunes as being signal instances of divine favor, is presumptuous—assuming party-spirit in omnipo-

tence, and establishing a Goshen unattainable by non-exclusives—Many of the calamities, indeed, considered unavoidable, proceed from defects descending by inheritance.”

“True enough !” interrupted my aunt, with a melancholy gesture ; “I have witnessed fatal instances of such calamities ; warnings which make one weep one’s very eyes out !—why such things are, is hidden ; we may as well enquire why this world was made at all ; why some can see and speak, and some are blind and dumb ; but there is healing in futurity.”

“There is,” said Fielding ; “the spirit is incapable of disease, the immortal, immaterial spirit ; but even *here* much of this calamity may be obviated ; at least mitigated.”

“I hope it may, I hope it may,” exclaimed my aunt, with fervor.—“Foresight is wisdom’s root.—At all events such terrible inheritances need not be perpetuated. Open the window Walter, I feel quite in a fever.—That was a merciful interdict which parted the leper from his fellow creatures Mr. Fielding.”

Fielding looked at the excited speaker with blended satisfaction and astonishment. I, too,

had been all along studying the countenance so seldom flushed by philosophic disquisition, satisfied that my aunt's affections, not her spirit of enquiry, led her to discuss topics so unusual. The word *interdict* like the voice of a disagreeable acquaintance made me wince : it seemed a herald of dim evils, starting forth occasionally with incommunicable warning.

"Happy the philosopher," ejaculated Fielding, " who by judicious insight into nature's laws shall diminish the amount of hereditary defect, and abridge the miseries which harass and curtail the life of man !"

"Yet such misfortunes are more endurable than those brought on by wilfulness," said Helen—"The one train of evil may bring with it the balm of resignation, the other must be followed by the horrors of remorse—I could suffer more patiently from other's faults than from my own, I think."

"Very true Helen," said my aunt, "and so could I. The mischief that we could not have prevented is more tolerable than the mischief that comes from one's own folly. Now Mr. Fielding give me your opinion of a case in

point—it is not every body I would consult so freely, I assure you.”—She looked cautiously around and almost whispered—“Now Mr. Fielding, suppose blindness, epilepsy, or some such woful inheritance was transmitted through parent to child from generation to generation, would not one be justified, nay would not one be called on to prevent the continuance of such a mischief?”

“Unquestionably,” said Fielding; “the selfishness which perpetuates such misery deserves the awful retribution it—”

“What in the name of gloom and gravity are you talking about?” said Marion, popping her head in at the window.—My aunt started, and began to disentangle her stocking thread.—“I have been listening with all my might; is Helen giving you a chapter from her favorite analogy?”

“Where is Quinilla, Marion?”

Marion endeavoured to reply, but some ludicrous idea was revived by the mention of Quinilla: her efforts were prodigious to get beyond, “she is,”—a merry-thought would intervene, and almost choke her. We heard

a symphonious titter from some one *en cachette*, and a distant booming of wild glee.

"She is not flumped into the duck-pond, is she?—What *are* the glen-boys hurrooing for?—I feel just like an addled egg—where is Quinilla, child?"

"She is fighting in the paddock—learning to *fence*."

"To what!"

"To fence," shrieked Marion, with a fresh burst which we were forced, from very sympathy, to join in—"Mr. O'Toole is teaching her."

"Do you mean that they are fighting with *real* swords?"—Where in the world did they get them?—Fence!—they'll stab each other—run and stop them Walter—a pair of nizzies!"

"Don't be afraid aunt, don't be afraid; Mr. Sanford put on guards—Quinilla stole the swords out of his case, because her brother told her all the lady-fashionists in London learned to fence.—Mr. O'Toole says there's no fun on earth to be compared with fighting."

"'Tis in the blood of the O'Tooles," observ-

ed my aunt, with sober gravity, while she diligently sought out another orifice in the well-darned stocking. "A family feature—Our ancestors were none of the rabble *settlers* you know Mr. Fielding," (*you know* was a complimentary inference my aunt assumed)—"They were descendants of one *Ogyges*, a great Scythian giant.—It was always a word and a blow with an O'Toole."

"And were the ladies O'Toole as pugilistically inclined?" said Sanford, who now leaned forward on the window ledge.

"Not at all," replied my aunt, with great alacrity—"Soft as lambs unless they were put out of their own way—I cannot imagine what possessed Quinilla! She is generally rather shy of danger—fencing indeed!—a pretty trade for women!—I wish you'd call her, Marion—and come in yourself; you look quite flushed."

An outrageous clapping of hands testified the performance of some *coup de mois*.—"They come; they come;" said Marion—"let us go in."

I could not explain why, but I did not like

to hear my sister couple herself thus with Sanford. They were hardly seated when Theodore stalked into the room clutching his sword as if it were a paviour's mallet—"I'd rather fight with a roasting-spit a dozen times over," ejaculated he, throwing himself into my uncle's arm chair.—"There's substance in that, but this *fouty* spindle-shanked thing! I wouldn't give a button to be stabbed by such a tooth-pick!"

"Nor I," said Sanford.

"I'll tell you what," resumed Theodore; "you may talk as you like, but Quinilla has more in her *nob* than any of you!—bates *O'Neil* to nine-pence; she's an excellent Richard the Third in the fighting scene.—Quinilla, come in here—give us the speech about the 'bloody deed,' that Monimia Bullock used to spout."

"Spout!" echoed Quinilla, rushing in, and waving her weapon furiously—" 'spout till you have drenched our steeples—spout, rain, wind, thunder, fire!' 'Avaunt!—thy bones are marrowless, and the lights burn blue!' "

"Bravo, bravo, bravo!" roared O'Toole. "I never saw any thing like it in all my life."

"Blood, blood!" gasped Quinilla displaying the white of her eyes; "out confounded spot!"

"Quinny, Quinny, you're a jewel," bellowed Theodore; "up to all the clap-traps." Fielding stared, and Sanford laughed abominably sly behind his pocket handkerchief. "The roll of your eye is capital Quinilla!—*ancore! ancore!*—*Cain* can't hold a candle to you!"

"Oh Romeo!" lisped the ductile actress, fixing her dramatic eye on Sanford,—“Give me my Romeo and I will cut him up in little stars.”

"Stars! fiddle sticks!" cried Theodore,—“what a conjuror you are! Stars indeed! he'd come down *squash!*—stick to your cue, your forte is tragedy. Do you remember when—”

"Music, heavenly maid! was young," exclaimed our cousin, throwing herself into a Lydian attitude.

"When was that I wonder? Music is a proper old maid by this time Quinny!"

"You put me out brother," said our cousin

angrily—" *O'Connell's* ode upon the passions is a lovely thing ; he makes Hope wave golden hair, something like mine."

" Quinilla, pray Quinilla," said my aunt, " put away that frightful sword ; tie up your hair, you look so fiery ; what *will* Mr. Sanford say ?"

" Oh ! it was he that put me up to it. We peeped in, as we passed by this morning, and saw you were so prosy ; so we thought we'd enliven you a little. What were you studying Mr. Fielding ?"

" Ourselves," said Fielding drily, with a keen glance at Sanford.

" And a very proper study Mr. Fielding—quite in my own way—' the proper study of womankind is man,' says Pope—didn't he Helen ?"

" Which o' the Popes said that I wonder ?" cried O'Toole.

CHAPTER. III.

" The gay Monsieur, a slave no more,
The solemn Don and the soft Signor,
The Dutch Mynheer, so full of pride,
The Russian, Prussian, Swede beside ;
They all may do whate'er they can,
But there's none that can *fight* like an Irishman !"

I WAS heartily tired of this noisy flippancy. There was no hope of a return to rational discourse.—My thoughts were bent upon escape; but Quinilla's eye was active ; her mood was juvenile as any kitten's ; I was not light of foot, and durst not venture to attract her notice by the slightest movement. She might address me as her Romeo, or force me to render up a pound of flesh ; in her poetic frenzy she was

capable of any freak that might shew off her versatility of talent.

My aunt, finding the mock combat had ended so innocuously, bustled off to hear whether her messenger had returned with a letter she expected from her husband.

"My uncle may be here to-morrow," said Helen, and she too left the room. Her remark seemed to affect the remaining party variously. Marion, after ejaculating "how glad I am!" fell into a reverie—Sanford and Fielding looked at each other as if instinctively. Quinilla's playful flutterings were suspended.—Theodore, making himself comfortable by lolling back and planting his feet upon the chair my aunt had just vacated, drawled out—"By our ancesters and so am I Miss Marion; 'twill put an end to all this dilly-dallying at any rate."

I thought this speech unblushingly significant, but it produced no consequence. Sanford might not have comprehended the polished phraseology.—"I too am glad," said Fielding; "our worthy host will have our thanks, at least, before we leave the glen."

"Who do you mean by *we*?" exclaimed Quinilla, sharply;—"are you going to run off with Marion?"

"To run from her would be safer," replied Fielding, coloring almost as deeply as my sister.

"Oh! you'll die a bachelor as sure as fate, a fusty bachelor—You and Walter can keep shop together—superannuated 'prentices!—we give you up—Marion need not set her cap at *you*."

"Miss Fitzgerald should rather be exhorted not to set her foot upon the necks of her admirers," said Sanford; "she seems more inclined to coldness than to courtesy."

I had been reddening with rage at the previous impertinences, for Marion's eyes were brimful of tears; but this speech somewhat appeased me, particularly as I perceived our cousin now, was bridling and broiling to my heart's content, while she kept up an intermittent giggle by way of manifesting indifference, balancing the sword upon her foot the while, which action shewed to advantage her pink silk stocking.

“*Lave* off your bickerings,” said O’Toole, yawning; “I like a battle-royal, but I hate a rumpus—give me that sword *Quinilla*; I want to chuck those gags off.”—He removed the guards—“There, now fight like a *Gla-di-a* tor, if you fight at all: squabbling is only fit for filly foals—How deuced sharp the points are !”

“Like some people’s wit,” exclaimed *Quinilla*, spitefully.

“*Bah !*” said O’Toole, “have done I say ; fretting spoils one’s complexion ; I never fret for a less thing than *grazing* a new coat. Give us a shake *Quinilla* ; you shake as well as *Catalana*—Give us ‘the brazen trumpet sounds.’ ”

Quinilla’s swell and ruffle were instantly becalmed ; she stretched out her slender neck fixed her eyes upon the ceiling, and struck up ‘the soldier tired,’ quavering in such a piteous fashion that I found myself from pure astonishment forced into a hysterical laugh, exceedingly painful, because it combated with a strange propensity to weep which for the last hour had possessed me. The sound of my own mirth appalled me ; I was totally unconscious that it

was a laugh till Quinny said it was. The demi-semi-quavers ceased, and, with a withering look, our cousin rose—Mr. Sanford is this to be endured!—do you permit a puling boy to insult me!—a raw non-entity!—Look at Miss Marion too—who gave you leave to laugh Miss—I'll not bear it—I'll not submit to it! Resent it Sir,"

"Madam," said Sanford, a questionable flickering playing round his mouth; "*dear* Madam, I dare not interfere; you have a worthier defender,"—He bowed to O'Toole—"one who can, without presumption, resent your wrongs."

The nervous hiccup which acted on me independent of my will, still kept up an intermittent bubbling: I could no more repress it than I could keep my heart from throbbing at the fright it gave me. Quinilla became furious; her words were spurted like a *feu de joie*, a disconnected pop, pop, more abundant than intelligible. "Go on and prosper—Mind your hits—Hop-a-kicky—humdrumpedant—B from a bull's foot—game leg—impudent brat;" was my share. Sanford came in for random shots

—"Pretty lover—much of a muchness—sit by and see me jeered at—spirit of a cat—drop into a decline—fragile form would feel it."

"Quinilla," cried O'Toole, expanding his pale eyes, "only tell me; are you in earnest, or are you only acting? for I'm a kitty-noodle if I know!"

"It is time to put an end to these mistakes," said Fielding, rising and addressing Sanford; "your conduct, to say the best of it, has been equivocal; you interrupt the harmony of a peaceful household; your attentions to this lady are misconstrued; whether you meant to lead her into error is uncertain, but it is very certain that she is deceived. Mr. Fitzgerald returns to-morrow; your explanations or mine must be made an hour after he arrives." He bowed and wished us a good morning.

My hiccup stopped at once. It was all up with poor Quinilla; the least astute of us was suddenly enlightened.

"Why which way does the wind blow now," exclaimed O'Toole, who had been whispering a whistle during Fielding's peroration.

"Blow!" echoed Quinilla, "it is a blow!—Dupe! am I a dupe!—a laughing stock!—am I?" she vociferated marching up to Sanford.—"Answer!—Out of my way Miss Marion; I don't want *your* condolence; 'tis pretty clear what *your* wheedling ways have brought about!—Answer me this moment, Sir—am I jilted, or am I your intended wife?"

The last word seemed to run like electric fluid through every fibre of the astonished artist; he looked in such an innocent amaze as ill became a perjured lover. I tried to move towards my sister, who stood trembling and gazing at our cousin with a half stupified expression, but something more effectual than iron gyves braced me to my chair.

"Speak!" cried Quinilla—"answer me this moment, Sir."

"My good woman," began the bewildered looking youth,

"Woman!" shrieked Quinilla, "do you dare to woman me!—I'm not a woman; I'm your betters, and you know it!"

"Assuredly," said Sanford; "therefore I

never entertained the presumptuous hope—I never even hinted at obtaining the honor you allude to.”

“Paltry evader!” cried Quinilla, “did you not dance with me, and walk with me, and praise me for the beauties of my mind?”

“One might dance or walk with a lady, and dwell upon the beauties of her mind without presuming to make love to her,” said Sanford.

“’Tis all the same in the Greek,” exclaimed Quinilla! but I see who has betrayed me—a chitty-faced hypocrite!—You loved me once, you know you did—Why did I refuse Mortimer McCarthy! Oh! Theodore, Theodore, had I stayed with Mrs. Bullock, I should not have been here to-day!—What am I now?—a poor, deluded, broken-hearted, abandoned young creature.” She fell into a chair, and then into hysterics.

Theodore during the strange dialogue had been looking unutterable things. At this appeal he put his arms a-kimbo and strutted up to Sanford; his ears projected awfully—

"Do you mean to say that you don't mean to marry Miss O'Toole?"

"My dear friend I never thought I should have been forced into refusing so extraordinary a favor; so utterly beyond my merits."

"Hold your humbug," cried O'Toole,—
"Answer without flummery. Don't put me into a passion; I'm dangerous!—Is it your intention to diddle *my* sister, Miss Quinilla O'Toole, out of her affections?"

"Heaven forbid!" cried Sanford. "I never formed the least design on such rare treasures."

"Then you're a scoundrel," said O'Toole.

Sanford bowed with perfect self-possession.

"*Lave* off your gentility, or by the powers I'll decant it out of you," cried Theodore, snatching up a sword. "I see you're a poltroon, and so I'll give you one chance more.—Do you mean to marry Miss O'Toole?—yes or no. We want no parleyvooring nor palavering—Do *you* mean to *marry* Miss O'Toole?"

"It wounds me to the heart," said Sanford.

"I told you so," cried Theodore; "you see that he can't answer a strait question like a

gentleman. You'd better not put me in a passion!—Do *you* mean to *marry* Miss O'Toole?"

"No."

"You don't, don't you!—Haith! that's coolish—may be you may change your mind my jockey!—First we'll take care that nobody comes in for snacks." He locked the door and threw the key out of the window. I began to feel alarmed, but Sanford's humorous expression and a suspicion that O'Toole's menaces would prove mere bravado reassured me.

"Now my gentleman," resumed Theodore, "neither you nor I will stir out of this spot until we give each other mutual satisfaction."

"Satisfaction!—for what?"

"For making my sister fall in love with you—what else?"

"A novel insult; still it shall be answered; but not here; not in a gentleman's house, before ladies, without seconds. Let us postpone—"

"Postpone!" roared O'Toole—"is it *put* off you *mane*?—Give you time to run away!—how soft you are!—Did any one ever hear of an Irishman postponing his satisfaction with a

sword in his hand and a *flook* of a foe overright him?—You want a backer do you?—There's plenty of us by, to swear to fair play—Here, handle your toothpick; you shall have the first blow—take it I tell you, and run it through my body, or by the head of my godfather, I'll run it through yours!"

Sanford took the sword, poised it lightly, threw it up, and twirled it with the perfection of *sang froid*.

"Come on," exclaimed O'Toole griping his sword and throwing open his waistcoat;—"no flourishes; strike any where below my chin; if you stick me in the face I'll strangle you, by the Pope I will!"

Marion turned pale; I rose—"For Heaven's sake—"

"Do not be alarmed," said Sanford, laughing. "The thing is too absurd; I can disarm this blustering fellow without—"

"What's that you call me?" said the Irishman, lashing himself into a fury—"say it again—dare it!—Do you *fellow* me, you trumpery, pettyfogging, sneaking, sniggering, sign-post manufacturer!"

“Bravo!” cried Sanford; “rage has lighted up your intellect.”

“Are you throwing a stigma upon my understanding?” roared O’Toole.

He rushed to the opposite side of the room—I thought to see him vault through the window, but he turned abruptly and calling out “Have a care! I’m going at you,” clenched his sword as if it had been a carving-fork, and made a run at Sanford, who, though not anticipating this extraordinary method of attack, stood on his defence, and would have parried, but that Marion caught his arm.—The mischief was irretrievable—O’Toole, equally regardless of my efforts and exclamations, as of his adversary’s sword, which grazed his shoulder, pressed forward with the home-thrust of a giant, and sent his weapon through the body of the unfortunate young man, who fell with a deep groan, —Marion fainted—I stood lock-jawed and shuddering, hoping I was in a dream. The blood which spurted from the wound brought forth the piercing shrieks of Miss O’Toole—The whole household thundered at the door—I saw the crimson torrent glide beneath it—I

grew sick—the room swam round, while I vainly tried to reach the door. My feet were in a pool of blood—Marion looked as lifeless as poor Sanford—The horrid dizziness encreased—I stumbled and fell.

CHAPTER IV.

Not in the breast most promptly bared
 Trust be reposed !
 The vacant house is pervious,
 The full stands closed !
 To one elect breathe wearily
 Thy untold fears :
 The whispers of three confidents,
 The world's ear hears !
 Frithiof—Strong's translation.

“ *Ochone ! Ochone ! Acushla agus asthere machree !** You're crushed downright entirely poor child !” such was the piteous address which recalled my senses. “ Grace,” I exclaimed, “ did I dream it ; is he dead ?”

“ Only next door to it *agragal*,” said dame

* Alas ! alas ! the pulse and beloved of my heart.

McQuillan ; " small harm ! why would he be purtending to poor ugly Miss Quin ! Get up darling : here's pretty murther in a peaceable house and the good man out of it : when rogues an' fools—"

" Let me know the worst Grace—is Sanford dead ?"

" There's nobody dead yet, *machree* ; which is very remarkable when you look at all the blood-shed : while breath is left we wo'n't give up."

" Where is Marion ?"

" Come out o' this slaughter-room Geraldine ogue ! make haste ; they want help up stairs ; your sisters are together—come away—the misthiss an' Mr. Fielding are with the dying man."

" Dying !"

" Come away I tell you—come this way." She helped me through the window and I thus escaped half the horrors of the scene.

" Go change your clothes ; I'll be wanted soon ; 'tis now we miss Slauveen an' Lanty !—Katy is off to Ballygobbin for the doctor—but that gentleman up stairs is worth a host o'

physic—go child—go to your lodging in the ruin yonder ; I'll bring you comfort soon."

" Let me see poor Sanford ; just for a moment Grace."

" See him, an' you as tender as a new-laid egg ! we have more patients than enough already ; people shouldn't keep whining an' keening, but handling their wits while there's life in the *corp* ! Ah darling ! if you had been playing single-stick instead o' blinding yourself with heathen books, tish't a little drop o' creature blood would knock you down that way." She left me hastily.

I took my way across the causeway, half assenting to the condemnatory judgment manifested by the tone of Grace ; instead of helping in cases of emergency I was found to be an added burden : the veriest youngster in the glen was a hero to me. " Am I really a coward ?" said I. A plunge and gurgling noise made me turn my head : it was Breesthough struggling in the water ; he was as sorry a swimmer as myself, had a horror of immersion, and eyed me piteously as he floundered from the causeway ; I jumped in, caught, and landed

him with some difficulty.—“ Had I had to dive in fifty fathoms I would have done the same,” thought I, “ therefore I am not a coward.” The dog shook his long drooping ears, his only personal attraction; rubbed himself upon the grass and capered: he had escaped from the portentous spit (freighted with a Michaelmas goose) by the sudden withdrawal of his arch enemy from the kitchen; and I doubt much whether, if he could, he would not have blessed the accident that gave him liberty to scamper after me, filling him with such amazing gladness as blinded him to the breaches in the causeway.

Instead of changing my wet clothes I threw myself upon my bed; the transported Breesthough looked at me with ludicrous inquisitiveness, as if demanding “ Why don’t you feel as glad as I do? sure Katy Mulligan is gone to Bally gobbin!” In other circumstances I would have enjoyed the animal’s extravaganzas, but now his yap and caracoles offended me. “ Down Breesthough!” Breesthough coiled himself obediently, and with a happy sigh surrendered him to sleep.

Solitude has no palliative for the reproofs of our offended monitor: if Sanford died I should impute his early fate to my want of firmness: in vain I urged my inexperience to excuse me, the confidence induced by Sanford's careless manner, and my suspicions of O'Toole's courage: I found behind the varnish of these exculpatory arguments selfishness, credulity, and indecision. It was true the unruly Irishman had barred all hindrance from the household, but the slightest signal from the window would have summoned a dozen stalworth arms to pinion the assailant: the tragic *denouement* indeed had been too sudden for prevention, but why did I permit the feud to go so far! "why," I repeated in agony of self-upbraiding, "because I hoped that Quinilla's pathetic sobs, (which were never intermitted during the dispute,) backed by Theodore's threats, might have had some effect on Sanford, and thus the poor young man was sacrificed."

These reflections brought on paroxysms of bitter self-reproach: I had been blind to every thing but the accomplishment of the one prime desideratum, the getting rid of Quinilla: the

form of Sanford, pale and gory, haunted me! I who had never killed a fly without remorse, had been accessory to the destruction of a fellow creature.

The day declined; I grew insupportably impatient: Sanford was dead, therefore I was forgotten! Grace found me burying my groans in my pillow—"Are you bent on encreasing our troubles?" said she angrily.

"He is dead Grace."

"He is *not* dead: if he was, 'tis God's will! edged tools won't be blunted because fools choose to play with um, and this Theodore O'Toole when his blood is up, is the most mischievous tool that was ever invented. I could have told you what stuff the Bagoorah is made of;—real Irish—we warned dame Mulligan over an' over again—half a score of our boys called after him 'Whiskers,' one day; O'Toole turned round an' tumbled um down as if they were skittles, or castles o' cards."

"We thought him a cowardly fool," said I; "he used to complain of a gnat bite."

"'Twas for the blotch on his beauty God bless you, not for the pain," replied Grace

“ he has plenty of *heart*, though his brain to be sure might be of the wrong sort ; but the greater the folly the greater the fear ; when a fool’s in a rage there’s no fraction o’ sense to get cool upon ; we needn’t call council however to find out how the mischief was done ; the matter in hand is how to mend it. You’re hungry—I have brought you a morsel o’ supper sir.”

Grace had unloaded a basket and arranged its contents ; I dared not encrease her displeasure by avowing my horror of food, so I feigned to nibble, while Breesthough gulped down, with noiseless rapidity, the bits I pretended to swallow. My dismay had augmented, for on examining the face of my visitor I discovered that she had been weeping, and Granny Mc Quillan was not one to weep for what could be remedied ; Sanford’s case was hopeless ! But even this contingency, terrible as it was to *me*, did not adequately account for the dark scud which flitted occasionally over my companion’s countenance, or for the anguish expressed by the involuntary clasping of her hands when she thought herself unobserved. I remembered

that, in the first instance, she had treated the affray as the merited result of the young artist's levity, and had expressed her apprehension of his fate with stoical composure: Grace tried to talk off the suspicion evinced by my enquiring looks; she replied with elaborate detail to my questions concerning Sanford, but testified merely compassion for his sufferings.

"'Tis a critical wound as ever I nursed," she observed, "clean through an' through! no hacking:—'twas never meant that men should battle with swords; a bludgeon is handy to every one: herbary ointment will mend the rap it gives; but to be blowing up furnaces for old Nic inventions that runs through a body's invisible entrails like skivers through fowls! who can come at the case?"

"But the Doctor can pronounce on the danger."

"He won't be here before midnight" said Grace; "Katy is mortal stiff for a messenger: wek eep the thing quiet; our boys might be for murdering O'Toole; that Sanford was more to *their* mind than to *my* mind!"

"Marion said every one liked him, poor fellow!" said I.

The dark scud again passed over Grace's features—"A loving heart leads one astray," she ejaculated;—"the crosses he'd laugh at, would build up her gravestone! there's wailing at hand! may the death cry be raised not for her, but the *sassana!*"

"Something dreadful has happened," I exclaimed; "tell me the worst; *I will* see my sister."

"Stop Sir," said Grace in a tone of authority—"it is hands that can help them they want, not hands that are wringing in sorrow; there's no room in that house for lamenters. Your sisters are safe—I told you so—stay where you are Sir: bear up like the rest—be bold—be a man."

How often in after trials has, "be bold, be a man," come between me and womanly weakness!

"They are safe" I repeated, "and——well?"

"Who could be well with such mischief abroad? there's some o' them better than you are however:—what a color you've got! a fever flush!—lie down love: I'll sit a wee bit on the bed-side and tell you a story."

She placed herself near me, turned the tail of her gown over her cap, rolled up her arms in her apron, and rocked herself gently. Brees-though laid his nose on her knee, heaved a contented sigh and complacently wagged his stump of a tail. "Well," pursued Grace relapsing into the familiar style of our Irish chroniclers, who make, 'well' and 'you know' their prelude and accompaniment. "Well Master Walter; —are you hearkening Sir? once upon a time, it might be two or three *hunder* year ago, since the great O'Sullivan Bear—you're not listening Sir."

"You have nursed many wounds Grace; did you ever cure as bad a case as Sanford's?"

"Not many indeed," replied Grace, resentless of the unkind interruption; "yet I've dressed broken heads scores o' times, an' spliced broken limbs—I cured one or two pike-cuts in the *rising* o' black ninety eight, the year o' the bloody rebellion you know; you hadn't your wisdom-teeth then darling."

"My father took a part in that rebellion," said I, won to attention.

"Bad advisers *ahashka*! before them con-

speeracy times Lord Gerald could match with the best in the land; many's the quality maid had a mind for him."

"He married Madame Wallenberg's niece," said I.

With a gesture of surprise Grace ejaculated, "so you know that the Baroness is your own blood relation! we thought you were kept in the dark: 'twas the wee shanashee o' the Wallenberg family, Berga Schmidt, and good luck to her that gave *me* a hint of the *sorrow tale*; *Ochone! Ochone! it dried up my joy! Berga remembers like yesterday, how your father an' your uncle came to Wallenberg Castle, and how both fell in love with that beautiful Julia; the angels above might consort with her, Berga said."

"And she married my father!"

"She made that mistake sure enough; it isn't the best of us have the best brains: the Baron was angry enough: but the Baroness couldn't say 'no' to her niece."

"Baron Wallenberg would have preferred my uncle for Julia."

"The Baron disliked her to marry at all you know," replied Grace.

"How selfish!" said I.

"One might think so indeed, for when Julia was willed to that nun'ry, her fortune, you know, was will'd to his first-born son: your father however was for nothing but love an' the lady; wouldn't ask for the lands! he had enough of his own, just then, to be sure; but Berga maintained that the Baron was by no means a close-fisted *gurthough*,* only staunch to the will of his brother-in-law—had many a *tiff* with his wife on the matter."

"Generous woman!" I exclaimed.

Grace shook her head—"The Baroness was blinded by love for her niece, just like Madam Fitzgerald, who never mistakes but in thinking Miss Quinny a beauty you know;—had I been the aunt, sooner than see her a wife I'd have planted the sod on her grave."

I was thrown off my guard—"For what reason" said I.

* Anglice *hunchs*.

Grace started and eyed me suspiciously.—
“ You *don't* know the reason then !”

There was no evading the shrewd inquisition of the eye turned sharply upon me ; I confessed I was only aware that Julia Derentsi's father had prohibited her marrying—but—”

“ Pooh !” interrupted Grace, “ is that all ? what harm is *that* ? who knows but the man might been hampered to death with a vixenish wife like Miss Quinny you know, an' so he resolved that no other good man should be hampered to death with his daughter ; may be he married into some cross-grained family, and might think that the mother's sour ways would go down in descent—often they do indeed ! look at the Cooneys, what vixens they are from the bothered great gran'mother 'down—if she had been hindered o' marrying what a power o' plagues the world had missed, an' the husbands besides, misfortunate *Boochals* !—then again there's the Carthy's—not a quiet *colleen* for fourteen generations ! whenever Bess Carthy flies out like a fury the neighbours remark, 'tis kind mother for her sure.*”

* That is, “ the mother before her was just such another.”

I saw through this shuffling, and through Grace's abrupt assumption of carelessness, but I knew her too well to hope she would impart what she might think it wisest to hide. "After all," resumed Grace, patting the turnspit, who seemed a rapt listener, "after all one is quite as well single; this dog and my cat might be joined in wedlock with just as much comfort as other ill-sorted couples I've seen—why there was my own share o' mankind—Jock McQuillan you know—a passable husband enough of a holiday; a pious man too, except in his passions—Yet I never knew what a scalded heart was, before Priest Macnamara consorted us. There's Bob Ryan that lives near the Cairn above, when he was a bachelor you never lost sight of his teeth for the grinning he kept—if he dare shew 'um now they'd be shoved down his throat!"

I listened with indifference, satisfied that the hidden mischief would not be made palpable by Granny McQuillan. "No, no," she continued, "we want no conjuring-key to find out that wed-lock's a lock, a good many would pick if they could."

"You forget my aunt and her husband," said I.

The indefinable lowering again wrinkled Grace's prominent forehead. "And how do you know but the thorns are rife which soon will be rankling the Geraldine's heart?—there's wo and distress to the wedded, even when they love one another—'tis bitter to weep for our own grief, but 'tis bitterer far to weep for the grief of him we love best!"

I eyed her wistfully; she began to reload the basket—"You will cause me to grumble if you preach up the blessing of singleness, Grace; remember I have *two* wives."

"Sweet angels!" she cried, abruptly intermitting her task and clasping her hands, "is the undeserved lot to befall them?—Will you seek for no other love sir? will you be watchful?—mark my words, Master Walter; let nothing divide you; give no heed to lamenting; them that yielded to tears repents of it bitter enough!—remember *my* caution; let nobody wheedle your sisters away—keep together I say—the bird that first flies the nest is the sorrowful bird."

"*I at least, could not fly far,*" said I, forcing a smile.

"Don't jeer, Sir; the tempter might come; our glen is no longer the lonely glen; the Geraldines might be divided—but remember my words, that day will be rueful to all of you—'tis late, Sir—I'll fresh up the bed for you."

"But Grace, why do you anticipate events so improbable?"

"Think so if you wish them to happen, Sir—shut your eyes upon all but your books. Can one read the day long, an' be up to devices, an' glances, an' wheedlings, with no one to watch but a gull that thinks every heart bleeding for love of her?—the foolish old *Girsha*? Your sister is left to the arts of the scatterling while you are inditing your Greek—will heathen-books help you to earn a bittock when want's at the door? there's poor scholars enough in the land without you."

I was mute from astonishment,—to what did this preamble on poverty tend? Grace proceeded—"When distress broke upon us, Miss Helen didn't fall to her books but her brains!—There's another too—do you think

that the man who lies down on this bed," (she was arranging Fielding's) "do you think he sees nothing but Greek with his eyes? would that make him handy to wounded an' sick, *shasthane!* not a bit of it—Get rid of your gibberish, Sir! it dries up your eyesight—Keep one eye to spare for your sisters at any rate; it isn't on ugly old spinsters young men waste their time."

I groaned; she had strengthened a tormenting suspicion.

"There, there," went on Grace, "don't despair—'tis misprision o' providence. I'll bring you good news at the dawn—go to bed—'tis your softness that makes you so useless, poor child! Won't you bid me good night, Master Walter? 'tis angry you are."

I held out my hand—"What a throb in your pulse! I wish there was some one to watch you—Mr. Fielding can't sleep here to-night—lie down love—I'll put a nice mug of whey in your reach! you'll have Breesthough for company;"—She smoothed down my coverlid, placed a rush squab for Breesthough, and left me. My blood was indeed at fever

heat, it was obvious that Grace had intended to prepare me for some disaster unconnected with Sanford's, and that during our interview she had hovered between contradictory fears. I heard her cautiously return and draw the bolt of my chamber-door; excitement surmounted the lassitude which oppressed me; she had left me no light, but a waning autumnal moon lent a pale flood of radiance, through favor of which, I groped to my closet and let myself down by the ivy ladder upon the mole.

It was a cold, raw night, heralding October. As the keen air saluted me, I felt a singular revulsion, an aguish trembling affected my parched frame—still a kind of delirious energy helped me onward.—The entrance to the cottage was carefully secured. I recognised the precaution of Grace in this arrangement—my sisters' chamber was unattainable, but opposite my aunt's a part of the cliff called the table-land, used by Katy for a bleach-ground, projected towards the house, and from this point I could pry into the apartment.

The curtains of the bed were closely drawn; a solitary candle glimmered on a table—Field-

ing stood near it intently gazing at his watch : beside him, white as the white curtain of the bed, sat my aunt. To see a pale, thoughtful face look wan and wo-stricken is not startling ; but to see a plump, florid, merry countenance, bloodless and gaunt, frightens you ; the busy play of features had settled into rigid sternness ; the bustling activity prompt in expedients had ceased ; the frame seemed stiffened—it was so unlike my aunt !—I longed to see her move, to be convinced she was alive. At length she drew a letter from her pocket and fixed on it a stupid stare ;—had horror at the late catastrophe quenched the delight she must have felt at the prospect of the return which I doubted not that letter heralded ? She gazed at it as earnestly as Fielding gazed at the watch : there was something terrifying in these moveless figures ! in the picture which my imagination sketched of the yet more rigid form the bed-curtains concealed. I could better have borne to see my aunt's face blistered with weeping, to see her hands raised in the bitterness of complaint ! I blamed myself for being well, even while my temples throbbed with

fever. All were transfixed with consternation—yet I was well! The stillness grew appalling! I should have added to my imprudence by unguarded ejaculations had not Helen entered the chamber: she placed a salver on the table, took the letter, thrust it into her bosom, forced my aunt to swallow the contents of a cup, and vanished. Her movements had been so swift, so almost winged, that I had not time to note her countenance: it seemed to me as if she had snatched a few moments from some more important care to minister to these night-watchers, and that in her hurried exit there was anxiety and fear—where was Marion?

I descended from my post of observation, stole round the house and looked up to my sisters' chamber; a light gleamed through the window curtain—the night was calm—I could distinguish voices—a few words reached me: they were harsh and violent—and then a faint scream; it seemed half smothered. I lost all prudence and called aloud; but the sounds above grew turbulent and drowned my voice: "It is Quinilla," I exclaimed, passionately,—

"she is tormenting my poor sisters—it is Quinilla!" These words I vehemently reiterated as I darted over path and causeway, with a speed induced by the paroxysm of fever. I reached the ruin and flung myself upon the bed—shivering and consuming thirst assailed me—I gulped down the beverage left by Grace and opened my hands to the compassionate lick of Breesthough; the dog was found next morning pawing my burning cheek with a sorrowful moan.

CHAPTER V.

Childhood's dreams

Long hushed, start up as waking into truth,
And in this ear soft whisper, with a sound
Familiar, as it were a sister's voice.

FIELDING was bending over me when I unclosed my eyes with the first glimmering of consciousness; I raised myself upon my elbow and stared around. "I have had such a dream," said I, "I must get up. What a horrid dream!"

"It has made you feverish," replied Fielding; "swallow this—it is not yet time to rise—compose yourself."

I obeyed through sheer weakness. From that day, though I recognised what passed around me, yet I felt no inclination to renew

my attempt to rise, to make enquiries, or to oppose my attendants, Grace and Fielding, who in turn, or together, watched near my bedside. I was passive as an infant : my nurses were keenly observant, but they never stimulated me to exertion, never questioned me : if they conversed with each other it was of the trees, of the birds, of the bay ; a low quiet monotonous dialogue, which amused without exciting me. They were neither sad nor cheerful, and but for their assiduous attention to my wants I should scarcely have known that they considered me an invalid—As to myself, I neither experienced pain nor anxiety—languor it is true pervaded my frame, but it was rather pleasing than depressing—I enjoyed without drawback the luxury of restoration to comparative health, for memory was asleep : I felt as if the date of my existence had just commenced ; like a nursling endued with faint consciousness, I fed and lay down at the will of my dictators.

I was considerably advanced in convalescence before memory began to awaken ; far from exciting it to action it pleased me to persuade my-

self that the images induced by my confused recollections were the consequences of my indisposition, and that as strength became renovated, so would the judgment, which should correct these seeming illusions. Although many of the half obliterated impressions of my childhood were restored, yet there was a chasm which I made no attempt to fill up. As a proof of my apathy I supplicated but once for a book; my request was not noticed, and I readily fell in with Grace's device to amuse me with the intellectual game of jack-straws.

At length I left my bed, and was permitted, leaning on Fielding or Grace, to saunter up and down the apartment: they would not suffer me to approach the window, and I was too happy to contend—Johnny's throne was the first object that caused a discordant sensation;—had I dreamed of the closet beyond?—was it possible I had climbed, in reality, the height I had so often scaled in my sleep? I sat down before the rude chair of state and considered it intently; my ideas became entangled; I looked around; the scene of the bridal fête was renewed.—

"Where's Sanford?" said I, abruptly interrogating Fielding, who was viewing me earnestly—" 'tis the wedding-day, is it?"

"You must sleep and get well before you are fit for a wedding," said Fielding.

I lay down submissively; Grace took her spindle and I closed my eyes to the changeless buzz which had often been my sedative. But sleep would not obey; memory was welding her chain, and swiftly but rashly restoring the links; my train of abstraction went busily on; the process was too trying for my still feeble judgment—bridal and funeral, wedding garb and winding sheet, were woven together; Quinilla was now a wife, and now was arraigned for murdering Marion—I started up, uttering a stern rebuke; Fielding echoed my words applying them to Breesthough, whom he reproved for having disturbed me; I stroked and comforted the guiltless animal; Fielding commenced a soporific dialogue with Granny, and I fell asleep.

The exercise I had taken induced long and profound repose: it was night when I awoke. A wonderful revolution had taken place in my

feelings and ideas ; I was perfectly collected ; without any exertion of my will past events were presented to my mind in orderly succession, up to the day made memorable by O'Toole's defiance ; but my illness and the incidents of that day were so connected that I could not accurately determine whether they were ideal or real, whether I had dreamed of, or witnessed them. The stillness was only interrupted by Breesthough's audible respiration, yet I did not believe I was unwatched : a rush-light in a wire lantern was placed in the cavity beneath the ponderous mantle-piece, throwing lines of a reddish, lugubrious glare upon the mutilated heads of saints, popes, and martyrs, huddled within the chimney : outside this golgotha the gloom was impenetrable ; I could just discern between the intervals of patch-work in the window frame, the shining ivy-leaves made visible by a silvery lustre. I felt a longing to rise, with an instinctive terror of being controlled ; Breesthough's loud breathing prevented my distinguishing any other ; I raised myself—no one interposed—our provident Granny had equipped me in a comfortable in-

tegument ycleped dressing-gown, of her own manufacture, thus superseding the inconvenience of shifting cumbrous habiliments. I reached the window and removed one of the numerous patches that obscured it; the night was clear and frosty—I looked towards the headland, and became, at once, sensible of the length of my confinement; the trees were naked which when I last beheld them, had displayed a vesture brilliant in autumnal tints. My recollection of the harrowing adventure that had caused my illness was now too vivid to be charged to fevered wanderings: Sanford was dead!

A slight rustling startled me; the lantern was removed from the chimney and was borne swiftly towards my bed—"Walter, Walter!" was repeated breathlessly—"Helen, my dear Helen!" Had we been parted for years we could not have embraced with more exuberant delight; and yet we wept. I dared not make enquiries; if Helen had had good news to communicate she would have proclaimed it instantly. "What an age since we have met!" at length I faltered.

"I saw you every day Walter at the begin

ning of your illness," replied Helen; "but they would not permit me to pass the threshold of your chamber while your fever lasted—we have suffered grievously! poor Quinilla! we hoped to see her married, and we credited the mere suggestion of her vanity. It was a selfish error, and justly punished."

"By life-long remorse," said I; "the image of that unfortunate young man will haunt me; did he die peaceably Helen?"

"Die!" repeated Helen, "do you mean Mr. Sanford? he is not dead."

"Not dead!" I ejaculated, "then I am the happiest being in the world! the very happiest! nothing shall annoy me now! Oh Helen I am so happy!" Helen pressed my hand and tried to speak, but a sob which seemed to burst from the heart's-core prevented her.

"Marion?" I gasped, "answer me."

"She has been ill Walter, but she is well now;—we are all well," added Helen sighing bitterly; "all well; and longing to have you with us once more."

"How we shall rejoice!" said I.

"You are sanguine," she replied, "I must

forewarn you—my aunt is changed ; such misfortunes—all together—”

“ Misfortunes !”

“ Enough to upset even her vigorous mind,” pursued Helen ;—“ that horrid scene ! her brother a murderer perhaps—your illness—Marion’s—my uncle’s absence—”

“ My uncle not yet returned !”

“ Business of moment detains him.”

“ He is dead,” said I, “ or Madame Wallenberg is dead.”

“ You are for killing every one,” said Helen, with a faint laugh. “ But I came to nurse you, not to talk ; thank heaven I have no disclosure to make so grievous as you surmise : you must sleep Walter, else Mr. Fielding will not consent to my keeping watch a second time.”

“ Fielding !” I ejaculated ; “ the preserver of my life !”

“ And the preserver of his friend,” added Helen ; “ the comfort and stay of my poor aunt ! Ah Walter ! while there was a question of your recovery she gave up her best aid under Heaven.”

I felt thoroughly remorseful ; the illness

which had left my family desolate had been brought on by my own imprudence :—was I always to remain a thing of tremors and nervous panics, giving way to impulses a woman had learned to control ! Though Helen said nothing of herself, yet I saw she must have braved these accumulated distresses with a heroism which had given her strength to act : had she yielded to puling sensibility what would have become of Marion ? even now it was evident she restrained herself from imparting some calamity considered too trying for my debilitated state. She presented my midnight anodyne ; I requested she would take some repose.

“ I have already slept,” said Helen ; “ Grace will relieve watch immediately : you need not tell me to be careful Walter ; a fresh source of anxiety might kill my aunt.”

Thenceforward, to the time of my complete re-establishment, Helen relieved guard, or shared it in the oak chamber : she had none of that prudery, misnamed delicacy, under favor of which sensitive young ladies evade the duties of a sick room ; her benevolence was active, her sympathies were generous ; she would bind

up a wound rather than weep over it: there were too few efficient helps in our household to sanction the indulgence of interesting reserve. Helen, the most retiring the most innately modest woman I ever met, never paraded bashful scruples to extenuate omissions in social or domestic duties; never permitted sentiment to interfere with principle; she lost nothing of the reverence due to woman by her contempt of such false delicacy; there was an innocent simplicity in her character, a trustfulness in her manner, which even the gay fashionist was forced into respecting. From the conversations I overheard between her and her fellow-nurses, I found their attendance on the cottage invalids had been indiscriminately apportioned, and that Helen's arm was as frankly tendered as dame McQuillan's to support the wounded artist when stouter aids were occupied elsewhere.

I was duly informed of Sanford's amendment; my own went on apace, for I was invigorated by the hope of removal to the cottage: although the conveniences of such an arrangement seemed obvious, yet it was never hinted at. I could not apprehend that O'Toole after

the late transaction had retained my apartment ; probably he was gone—And—'spite of all my efforts to be generous my heart fluttered at the supposition—perhaps Quinilla had gone with him ! I was averse from mentioning this man ; he operated on my fancy like the raw-head and bloody-bones whose threatened appearance used to frighten me in baby-hood—the mere thought of him revived the horrid qualms I had experienced at the result of his intemperate attack, and I now cautiously refrained from touching upon subjects which might bring on excitement and relapse. But in proportion as my retrospective spirit was kept down, so did my spirit of observation keep on the alert. I diligently noted Helen to gather from her countenance the measure of the apprehended evil ; but Helen's schooling in fortitude though short had been effectual ; reverses were met, with a steady equanimity astonishing in one so young and inexperienced ; the natural tears drawn forth at our first meeting were soon dried up ; her accustomed vivacity indeed, had settled into an even, placid, seriousness ; but there was neither gloom, nor sigh, nor hurried excla-

mation, to set the mind of the observer upon the rack of doubt. Between her and Fielding a quiet, confidential intercourse seemed established; each consulted the other with unembarrassed freedom. The force of Fielding's character gave energy to Helen's: his lessons had imbued her with higher views and interests; in becoming more admirable she was not a whit less loveable; there was the same blushing simplicity, the same diffidence, the same unstudied delicacy which had always marked her character: she had loftier aspirations but not purer, more fixed opinions and clearer aims, but not kindlier; her enthusiasm was modified not destroyed.

Among the little community of the old oak chamber there was one blest without alloy; I venture to affirm, that Breesthough would not, if he could, have bartered his brute nature, limited span of being, and the elysium his long holiday bestowed, for our higher faculties, more protracted life, and less intense enjoyment. The animal lost all his claims to pity; he grew fat and saucy; his begging tricks and humid eyes, his doleful whine and tail deject-

edly pensile ; all his interesting attitudes and habits existed only in remembrance ; whichever lucky chance prevailed, whether Katy thought her slave had fled the settlement, or that she had laid aside her rod of office, substituting boiled for roast as most convenient, certain it was that Breesthough had continued unassailed.

Meantime my forecasting of some dire mischance was deepening ; days past, I was nearly well, took exercise upon the mole, and yet no visit from my aunt or Marion ; no hint of my removing to the cottage ;—nay, a turf-kish had been added to my furniture, the skulls of my golgotha ejected, and a fire established in the chimney-vault by our indefatigable Granny. I thought my self-control heroic, for I made no comment ; but my pulse betrayed me ; Fielding looked alarmed ; I stammered something of suspense ; he drew Helen from the room, and I saw them slowly traversing the causeway, and seemingly in serious consultation. My attention was so engrossed with trying to interpret something from their gestures that stealthy footsteps entering the chamber were unnoticed.

"Bounce the cobbler!" cried a voice: the elegant phraseology was sufficiently indicative; to turn and recoil were co-instantaneous.

"Why how skeered you look; as green as a goss lettuce; between spoony and wishy-washy," exclaimed O'Toole. "Stop shaking man; do you take me for a bugaboo? What a pippin sneezer of a thing you are!"

He gathered up the skirts of his coat while he was speaking, and threw himself upon my bed, heaving a satisfied grunt, extending his huge joints, and eying their bony angles with complacency.—"Tis the first comfortable stretch I have had for many a long day," he continued; "they made me lie *cugger-mugger*, in Kitty Driscoll's cabin, cooped up in a scrimp of a settle without a night-cap or a bolster! My hair is ruined—look at my skin—What an object I am!—the smoke was enough to destroy any man's complexion!—How glum you are—have you a tongue in your head man?"

"Well," he resumed, after a short pause, "I'm more free than welcome I suppose—we'd draw *raison* out of a real man, but I care no

more for finikin things like you than for a jack-snipe."

"We accord in one thing perfectly," said I,—"in our opinion of each other."

"Speak plain, dang it," retorted Theodore ; "I hate to have to guess at a man's meaning—it makes me bilious—are you for fighting or formaking friends—shake hands—you won't—don't—hang the news I'll tell you then ; there's the dickons to pay, but mum's the word ; they'd play randy with me if you fell back into the fever."

I pretended to be occupied with Brees-though, who had slunk between my feet ; his recollections of O'Toole doubtless had revived the bondage of the dog-days.

"There's the dickons to pay, Watty, I assure you—don't be frightened can't you—things are so bad they couldn't be worse indeed—don't turn so white man—Katy says they keep you in the dark for fear of murdering you. Now that's not fair thinks I—I'll give the poor *shingawn* a splink o' light says I—so here I come, like fee-faw-fum." He flung out his ponderous arms and yawned contentedly.

I tried to keep down a gurgle in my throat—
“Helen assured me that Sanford has not materially suffered from your murderous attack.”

“Suffered from a flea-bite,” interrupted O'Toole, “fudge ! you're a perfect *gommul* Watty ; with all your Greek and Latin you know no more of life than just a cock-roach ! What do you *mane* by murther man ? I'll tell you—cutting a man's throat when he's asleep, sticking a body in the back when he don't see you ; that's the signification o' murther, man alive.”

I turned away fretfully.

“A *poorty* fuss indeed they made about the touch I gave—just nicked a little vein or something. Laura screeched as if she saw a corpse. I was sorry enough for her and Quin the *cratures* ! but I knew well myself, the hole that tooth-pick made, would fill up in a frog-hop.”

“Do you pretend to say that Sanford's life was not endangered ?”

“Is it in danger you *mane* ? not a bit of it — the *googawn* of a doctor swore it was—I swore it was not—‘the vital parts escaped by a miracle,’ says he—‘what does it signify by

what a thing escapes if it does escape ?" says I. ' I bet you three tenpennies,' says I, ' and that's as good as two and sixpence, he's walking in a month or two,' says I. ' Wasn't I right ? wasn't he walking yesterday ? wasn't he throwing up love-sand and sheep's-eyes at somebody's window ? talk of a man dying of a pin-hole !"

I could scarcely believe this folly was sincere, and looked at him suspiciously.

" The butcher that killed the ram o' Darby might wonder at the blood upon my conscience ; but, bless you, Watty, I saw as great a flood from nothing but a lancet. I saw more than that, I saw the Irish giant, Hugo Samson, run through and through with an iron spike a fathom long that he fell out of a window on ; and he lived to ninety eight ; *there's* for you !"

" In 'spite of all these miracles," said I, " you are lucky that you were not tried for murder."

" Bah !" said Theodore, " Brelyer Barry was your fosterfather ! I told you before what murther meant : if you die in your own defence man you can never be hanged for murther,

but only for manslaughter; didn't I tell him not to put me in a passion? didn't I give *odds*? didn't I open my waistcoat to give him the first touch? Don't think I'll let him off so easy though—I'm longing to be at him—I'm longing to give him a *rambasting*, with a ten year old tormentor, something that will soften a bone at any rate?"

"Then you are a brutal ruffian," said I.

O'Toole half rose, dropped his lower jaw, and opened his great globular eyes so wide that Breesthough bounced back and barked at him. "Did you say that in earnest or only just to show your bravery my boy?"

"If you assault that man again," said I, "you are a brutal ruffian."

He started from the bed, clenching his fist, but in approaching me he tumbled over the turnspit, which, in trying to run away, ran the wrong way—"I tell you what my man," said Theodore, rubbing his knees and resuming the perpendicular; "'tis the best day you ever saw that we are cousins of some sort—look at that window if you *plase*—by my critical powers I'd pitch you out of it, and that vagabond dog

upon the back of you, with all the pleasure imaginable, but for our relationship. Never mind it though—*your* beating shan't be lost—I'll give it on the double to that sniggering jockey; it shan't be lost I promise you; I'm nursing an oak-twig for him!"

"No one but a savage like you," I exclaimed, "could think of renewing the horror of my poor aunt; *you* sorry for your sister—*you*! you have no affection in your nature."

"The devil I havn't! and what made me risk a double-breasted waistcoat as good as new I'd be glad to know?—wasn't it affection for my sister?—what spoiled my best coat and velvet collar but affection for my sister? the cloth can't be matched, and all round the arm-hole is dyed a dirty purple!—don't you call that affection for my sister?—to have a *shuper-fine*, bottle-green cloth dished and done up by a *fouty* pin-hole of a wound! if it was even a glory-mark itself—Sanford has a fine red scar to shew. No affection!—*Bathershin*!—what cramp^e me up in Kitty Driscoll's settle without a bolster? what makes me longing to pound Sanford into stock-fish? affection for my sister

isn't it? me! I'm as soft as a feather-bed and softer; we like remarks indeed!"

I examined his countenance again, to be assured this absurdity was not put on; but he looked doltishly sincere. "The head is hollow," thought I, "except where it is occupied by besotted vanity, blind rage, and a scantlet of what he calls family affection."

"'Tis kind father for me to be fond of fighting," went on O'Toole; "Dad was always at logger-heads with somebody: our ancesters were heroes to the spinal marrow; didn't my own great uncle by the mother's side face four vagabond thieves one moonlight night in his own back parlour with nothing but a bread knife? didn't he squinch the life within 'um before they could cry 'bolt' to one another? warn't they so struck of a heap they couldn't drop, but there they stood upright as pike-staffs, dead as dried hake, till they were marched off to be hanged next morning?"

No remark was made upon this veritable exploit which had been touched on, as Cork news, once before by Slauveen, without indeed the marvellous addenda. O'Toole rubbed up

his whiskers and viewed himself devotedly in the fragment of a looking-glass. "Do you think I look the worse for my confinement Watty? *you* look abominable! *quaky shaky* like Mrs. Hurly's head on Hammond's marsh!" He glanced over his shoulder at the glass, with a self-enamoured smile, slid forward, and bade me observe how well he walked a minuet.

Breesthough stared at him, cocking his head inquisitively.

"My chitterlings are rather crumpled," resumed Theodore: "they used my cravat stuffing to stop the blood—what nonsense that was now!"

I began to listen with satisfaction, inferring from the idiotic babble that no serious misfortune could have happened; but I did not as yet thoroughly understand this genuine *lusus naturæ*. One virtue was conspicuous in him—sincerity—he had no secret sins; there was as little leaven of astuteness in mind as in physiognomy—he termed *humbug* that which most men termed reason, and *vice versa*:—if he wandered from the point that brought him to the ruin it was through folly not perversity: he

had not wit enough to *intend* a plot: his flashes of brotherly affection, to which I trusted, were literally flashes, puffed out by the hurricane of some inordinate propensity. He had also a glimmering sense of honor as connected with what he termed bravery, but it was the undirected instinct which keeps the stag-hound from trampling the whelp. These flashes and glimmerings however awakened a hope that he was not completely callous, that he could not perform baboonish antics before a looking-glass if things were so bad that they could not well be worse!

While I was meditating, O'Toole also was reflecting; he tried the effect of his impressions on the conscious mirror in various modes, and at various shades of distance, shouting at intervals broken stanzas of some vulgar ballad, the burden of which was 'delicate Darby O'. His contortions at last became so hideous that the turnspit raised a strenuous and lengthened howl, running round and round the object of his terror as if fascinated: the noise was unbearable, I stopped my ears, but my eyes were now saluted by another apparition—Katy Mul-

ligan, puffing through a mutilated pipe and stuck between the door-posts, glaring at the turnspit!—I never felt the full force of an honest stare till then—O'Toole had too much devotion for the image he was worshipping to note Breesthough, who, lulled by the sounds himself was making, heeded not his ancient enemy, but kept wheeling round the centre of attraction. Katy changed from *dumb-founded* to irate; she stuck the pipe into her apron-string, stole forward, and Breesthough was hanging dingle-dangle by the nape before he could address a prayer to Jupiter. No other tongue but her own sweet vernacular could have furnished Mrs. Mulligan with one tithe of the expletives she showered on the turnspit, shaking him at every soft address as if he were a mop. Breesthough dared not utter a complaint; he crossed his poor fore-paws, wagging them at me imploringly; but I knew the temper of his task-mistress too well to think that interference would benefit the petitioner.

“Why then is that *you* Katy Mulligan” cried O'Toole, turning from himself to Katy—“’tis time for you to think of one—just look

at me—isn't this a sweet condition of a man ! wasted to a mammoth ! crimped up in a settle, without a bolster, for fear of being nabbed for nothing ;—are they satisfied, at last, their tender skinned young man won't die this time ?”

“ Small harm if he did, so 'twasn't an O'Toole that massacred him,” said Mrs. Mulligan ;—“ a sore heart to him, and you too, for a couple o' brazen-faced deluders,” added she, addressing Breesthough with shake the fifty-first, “ to be provoking one to swear in this way. So 'tis nourishing yourself up you *wor*, you sneering, ill-looking, crooked-legged, squinty-eyed, snaiking, thraipsing, shag-eared, disgraceful, unnatural baste ! an' I wasted to the bone with grieving after you, as if you *wor* a beauty : an' *you*, too Master Walter, dwindled to a 'natomy ; all changed from spectres into skeletons !”

“ Will you answer a man's question, Katy Mulligan and leave off jowering ?” said O'Toole, spreading out his palms with pathetic earnestness, “ am I to be coddled like a Kerry-pippin in a smoky cabin until doomsday ! am I hung-beef ! am I a kidney potato, the better for being buried, am I ?”

"They're afraid to trust you with the painter. Misther O'Toole : he's getting on limberly, but he's not quite ready for a sound baitin' yet Sir ; you'd best go to Cork to see the Master Sir."

"So I would, Katy Mulligan, if my linen was washed."

"We'll send it after you," said Katy, "we want you to take these duds to the good man." She stuffed Breesthough's head under her shoulder, and unrolled her apron—"There's a letter some where or another if I haven't swallowed it."

"I thought Fielding was going," said O'Toole ; "you'll choke that dog, Katy Mulligan."

"*He* going !" vociferated Katy, "and what's to become of us when he's away, for the love o' the pope's leggins—The Ballygobbin doctor is no more to compare to him, than a duster to a damask napkin !"

"Or cow-beef to staggering bob," added O'Toole.

"What keeps my uncle so long in Cork ?" said I, hoping to be satisfied at last.

"He likes it may be," replied Mrs. Mulli-

gan ; “ mightn’t there be a fair, or a show, or a sale, or somethin’ ? Pat Croony wants a sturk or two.”

Theodore shut his left eye fast, and shot a glance at me, intended to be knowing, “ What a whopper, Watty !”

“ Here’s the letter at last ; you’d best be off at once sir,” observed Katy ; “ I’ll send over to Bill Driscoll’s and cram the things into the pack—Come along you dowlas-hearted *vagabone*,” she continued, again griping the nape of the forlorn turnspit.

“ You’ll choke that dog, Katy Mulligan, as sure as ever John Hobbs was choked.”

“ Don’t every thief hang by his own neck ?” retorted Katy ; “ a crooked disciple ! wasn’t he nigh distroyin’ me ?—a brute that I brought up myself—choking’s too good for him ; to be hidin’ himself up the *chate*, o’ purpose to keep me in a twingle-twangle.” She was striding off, but turned round abruptly with a censure of her own forgetfulness—“they sent me to tell you that Miss Marion is coming to see you, Master Walter ; but the sight o’ this discreditable villain drove the brains bang out o’ me.”

I was too overjoyed to find fault; poor Breesthough, finding I would not interfere, gave himself up for lost, and heaved a sigh so doleful, agitating gently his scanty portion of a queue!—my heart was melted.—“Leave the dog here until to-morrow,” said I, “only till to-morrow Katy.”

“Are you dramming o’ digging up diamonds, to be for humoring the lazy *galoot* that way Sir? how *flawhoole* of your pity you are! what do he deserve, for making me b’lieve that he was *massacred* along with t’other boy?” She clutched him still tighter, and I saw the animal borne across the causeway, oscillating, to and fro, as he was swayed by the vigorous arm of Mrs. Mulligan.

“Well now what thumpers some people can tell!” cried O’Toole—“a sale! Pat Croony wanting a sturk! we give you the bush Katy Mulligan for making short cuts—deep as a bog; I never was up to such twists and turns; ’tisin’t in me.—Why Watty, the short and the long of the upshot is—but that’s true—can you lend me a clean shirt?” I pointed to my trunk impatiently—O’Toole stuffed his pocket and re-

turned to the window—"Why Watty the short and the long—well, see *that* now!—if that's not Helen and Marion just upon the causeway: we don't want to meet Miss Marion any how: she could quit her wounded *leedy* bird at last, she could—the back of my hand to her!—I'll be off to Bill Driscol's in the boat Watty; we're *obleegeed* to you for the shirt my man."

CHAPTER VI.

“ The cause is secret, but th’ effect is known.”

I FELT an unaccountable tremor as I watched the approach of my sisters ; it was tardy, or my impatience made it seem so. I left the window and threw myself into a chair ; my sane resolution to keep self-tormenting whims at bay overborne by a fool’s remark. Grace’s hints of Sanford recurred : had Marion’s visit been indeed delayed by her devotion to the wounded man ? We had been *all* to each other—Marion, Helen, and myself—from various circumstances I had been led to consider our fates inseparable ; that we belonged to each other exclusively, and

that the party who should permit a different tie to supersede that natural, strict, and grateful bond hitherto so all-sufficient, would incur some terrible responsibility. Was Marion already alienated? I was prepared for a change in person, but was she changed in mind?—how slowly she came! perhaps she regretted leaving Sanford! Her arms were around my neck before the last conjecture passed away.—“Walter, my own dear Walter!” Her rapture at our meeting was expressed with her characteristic fervor and enthusiasm; she questioned me through sobs and laughter. Helen, colorless as marble, stood fixedly observing her, while she burst into these alternate rejoicings and complaints. I forgot my recent causes for disquiet as I looked at her: Marion was neither changed in mind nor person: the thousand questions a thousand times repeated, expressive of the fondest interest, the piteous exclamations at my altered aspect, spoken with that peculiar idiom, in itself persuasive of affection, satisfied me of her undiminished love. I scrutinized the beautiful face; there was as little change in that; where were the lustreless eyes and pallid

cheeks I was prepared to see?—my transient glimpses of myself had detected the ravages of a protracted illness in the sunken visage and attenuated frame—but Marion's eye and cheek were brighter than before! Helen's greeting had been fond and solemn; Marion's was fond and joyful: Helen had addressed me with guarded seriousness, her sister was all openness and volatile confidence, answering my enquiries without a shade of hesitation or reserve.—She was quite well, had never felt so well; poor aunt though was downcast, but then the sight of Walter would cheer her up again: she could not think what kept her uncle; perhaps he had gone over to Germany with Madame Wallenberg—Mr. Sanford was recovering—if the Baroness would come back and I would look a little better she should not have a single thing to wish for. It was Mr. Fielding who had prevented her seeing me before: he was a sullen man that Mr. Fielding—wished to send away Mr. Sanford before he was half cured!—but then aunt and Helen liked him, so she supposed she must like him too.

It is impossible to picture her vivacity; I

perceived that she had been kept as ignorant as myself of what related to my uncle.

Helen, meantime, silent and moveless, continued to observe her sister as intently as if our joint lives depended on her words. Though dissimilar in form and complexion there had been striking points of resemblance between the sisters: this resemblance seemed all at once obliterated: the elder, Marion, had always looked the younger, and illness, so far from having lessened this appearance, had lent to her an added tint of juvenility: her animation was electrical; it bordered on the flights of thoughtless childhood; while Helen's graver deportment took from her extreme youthfulness, and a shade between melancholy and seriousness impressing her features, gave them the character of mature experience.

At length I ventured to name Quinilla. Marion started; a singular expression superseded the flashing animation of her countenance—"Quinilla," she repeated, "I hate her! don't you?"

"No," said Helen, advancing, "Walter does not hate Quinilla; he is tired Marion, he should

lie down now: come, you have to visit your blind minstrel."

Marion reflected for a moment; a moodful expression stamped her countenance as she enquired whether she might come again to-morrow.

"Aunt wishes to come to-morrow," answered Helen.

"Then we can come together," rejoined Marion quickly.

"If Mr. Fielding thinks that Walter will not suffer from so much company."

"Mr. Fielding!" repeated Marion. I fancied that she looked scornful and angry. Helen took her arm and they left me.

The joy Marion's presence had diffused went with her: I tried to fix my thoughts upon her artless expressions of tenderness: it would not do; something too vague for thought to pierce would interpose and baffle my attempts at self-illusion. The more I pondered the less I doubted her attachment to Sanford; her dislike of Fielding, her bitterness towards Quinilla, were deducible from this new-born affection; Fielding wished to separate the lovers, therefore

he was censured; Quinilla had been the cause of the attack on Sanford, therefore Marion hated her—Hated! could Marion hate? could a sentiment foreign to her nature be so suddenly engendered? Marion's arch malice, her bantering drollery, in their highest effervescence were arrested by an appeal to her affections; the tear would start, and a thousand earnest kindnesses would redeem her levity—"I hate her don't you?" was ringing in my ears. Still more perplexing were the look and tone which gave this sentence its peculiar force; it was not uttered from the half-sportive impulses which had formerly led her to exaggerate her expressions of dislike; it was pronounced with the deep intensity which the sentiment inspires in its bitterest action. It was true that, in common with us all, Marion had disliked Quinilla, but *hatred* was a feeling so unsuited to the object; our cousin was a silly not a wicked woman; in her most extravagant perversities Quinilla could be considered as, simply, an annoyance; she had not sufficient intellect to authorize hatred: it was not the spirit of evil but the spirit of distempered vanity that had

caused the lamentable affray ; even I, her particular butt, and the subject of her vulgar caricature, *I* found it impossible to hate her. To drive off unpleasant reflections I determined to force my ideas into a different channel, by entering my long neglected rookery.

The mere sight of it restored my bibliomania ; a cranny of my own, in which I could abstract myself from every body, had in it something of reviving—I was ‘ Monarch of all I surveyed’—I and an old crow who seemed bent on disputing the sovereignty : my *penates* were as I had left them ; my books, my writing apparatus, my lock up in the window-seat. The gift of Madame Wallenberg was the most obvious treasure of my crypt, I looked at the portrait and started ; the resemblance to Marion was even more striking than I had thought it on a former inspection ; I hastily replaced the medallion unnerved by the same unaccountable horror which had before assailed me, and began diligently to write a memorandum of occurrences, carefully abstaining from dwelling on my own desultory surmises.

In my eagerness to chase away annoying

thoughts I had omitted to replace the curtain, and Grace McQuillan's quick, firm, step was recognised before I could remedy the error. Finding the outer room untenanted, and perceiving a void which, as she had never noted it before, she inferred had been wrought by some energetic *open sessamum*, with 'save you kindly,' she advanced into my sanctuary. Her commentary was short, and illustrated by an expressive shrug—she hoped I was not laying in a fresh stock of unprofitable *lingo*, but learning something solid which might turn to account upon a rainy day. This half condemnatory, half expostulatory apothegm was rendered still more forcible by a sly kick which she bestowed on Strabo, whom her bustling entrance had jostled from his shelf. She had favored me with homilies of this character before, the scope of which so taxed my comprehension that I had given up guessing at it. Her quick eye reconnoitred the appurtenances and arrangements of my hiding-place, while she silently unpacked her dinner basket. I thought of Breesthough as the limb of a *roast chicken* was paraded. Grace continued taci-

turn, her brows were knitted closer than was customary, and her usual encouragement, "piek a bit *cushla 'sthore*," which used to form the zest of my repast, was churlishly withheld. It was the first time in my life that I had seen Grace McQuillan idle, and in a *real* ill-humour; her knitting or her humming-bird (the pet name for her distaff) hitherto had always filled up the spare moments of attendance, but to-day there was no touch of sociability; no yarn spun out good naturedly to protract my meal; she stood with her arms crossed, provokingly respectful. At last I ventured to address her—"Why are you so wrathful at my books, Grace?"

"We thought, Sir, you had left off consorting with those roots o' laziness; the Madam says they're full o' knaves that teach one just to filch an' murther! fine examples! fit enough for tithe-proctors.—Didn't Berga tell me that *Jarmany* was sacked last year by the very ditto of your ancient thieves; he cuts your throat, says Berga, an' shoots you, an' calls himself deliverer; distraining lawful tenants, an' patting in unlawful tenants of his own; pretending

all the while he came to help the harvest ! The Baron and his son, thrashed him bravely and sent him into limbo ; he'll come again Berga thinks if they don't hang him. Purty rogues for copy-books !

The welcome digression from irrelevant topics to the Wallenbergs, gave me hope of luring Grace into the *sorrow tale*. "These German Barons truly are brave gentlemen," said I, "so they drove out this aggressor—did Berga ever tell you Grace, that Baron Wallenberg had a daughter ?"

"She might and she might not : eat your dinner Sir." This was a stroke definitive : I wound up my repast with one solitary remark ; it was on Theodore's fool-hardiness.

"We're not all born with peaceable minds no more than with supple fingers," said Grace drily.—"The bucket can't draw up what's not in the well :—we should mend ourself, and make allowance for our neighbour." She left me with no other farewell ceremonial than a second kick at Strabo, which, had the geographer been there in the flesh, must have crippled him.

: Fielding had casually observed that Sanford

would occupy my chamber at the cottage until his removal could be accomplished with safety, and that after the late event all communication between him and me must be constrained and awkward ; my impatience for his departure was heightened by the day's occurrences, and I felt indescribably enlivened when, during the evening visit of Helen and my friend, this departure was spoken of as decidedly arranged.

I slept soundly on this opiate to my cares ; no homicidal faces, multiplications of O'Toole's, gibbered near my pillow ; no jealousies of Sanford quickened my heart's throb—he was going!

I awoke with a floating consciousness that something pleasurable had happened, and watched the rays of dawn creep along the chamber-wall, impatient of their tardy march—Fielding still slept—I wrapped his cloak around me and descended to the mole. The sharp frosty atmosphere, which in my desponding moods made me shiver, now braced my nerves ; I walked at a brisk pace up and down the mole, noting the wintry aspect of the landscape : the heath of the opposite mainland presented a bleak and blossomless outline ; the fern was gemmed

with hoar-frost; a light breeze lifted partially the streaks of mist that obscured the deeper features of the glen, forming them into mountain draperies which the early sun dappled capriciously: the bay, curling into little billows, began to twinkle; I sat down upon a rock overhanging the creek which sometimes harboured William Driscol's boat, to observe more leisurely the filmy vapours rolling upwards; rocks started forth at intervals, then seemed to melt into appearances threatening and shadowy as the ghosts of Ossian.

I was so intent upon identifying those ethereal cloud-forms with Fingal and his host sweeping from the hills of Moilena, and so unprepared for beings palpable and earthly, that I gazed upon two figures emerging from a dell upon the mainland, expecting to behold them float upwards and evaporate. A narrow channel only intervened between the islet-crag I occupied and this romantic dell, which nestled Driscol's cottage; but the vapour still hung upon the valley so condensed as to hide the cabin-roof and to mistify the figures of whose substance I was dubious. The shapes became less question-

able as the sun rose higher. Two other persons now emerged and joined the former; they advanced to the water's edge and all four jumped into a boat: it pushed off making for the island. I watched it with that intuitive uneasiness which is often the precursor of something disagreeable; Sanford and William Driscoll were the rowers, their companions were females enveloped in hooded cloaks, one of which by its peculiar fashion I recognised as Grace McQuillan's: the cowl of the other was thrown back displaying the chubby face of Kitty Driscoll. The females landed; the boat was veering to the creek beneath my jutty: I slunk away to avoid a person for whom I felt almost antipathy, excusing to myself this unfriendly conduct by inferring that Grace had brought breakfast, and that Fielding was expecting me; but from the winding path which led to the front of the ruin, I descried my friend speeding over the causeway, and I rested against a buttress debating whether I should join him. A pair of hands pressed against my eyes startled me—"I was resolved to come you see," cried Marion, "I was resolved they should not stop me, Walter; so I

gave them the slip under cover of Granny's cloak ; luckily William's boat was moored beneath the headland : we crossed the bay to Kitty's cottage, and then we all got into the boat again, and here we are."

Her old laugh so low, yet so in earnest, wound up her account of this adventure.

" ' We' and ' all,' " said I, " you are ambiguous dear Marion."

" Misty like the morning," she replied, " but we shall both clear up. Why Walter by *we* I mean dame Driscol and myself—Kitty is always with me now, a spy on Mr. Sanford I suppose." There was a spice of bitterness and irritation in this remark—she resumed—" I was bent upon the frolic, and forced Kitty to consent ; she bargained however that we should flit over to her cabin and make William of the party—think of my eluding Granny's sybil eye ; nay stealing the witch's cloak for passport to the headland ! Mr. Sanford was waiting for us there ; he was no great help in rowing though poor fellow ; his wound is scarcely healed ; but *I* can paddle on occasion, and Madam O'Driscol pulls an oar you know, and

steers a boat as well as your old Trojan pilot. The bay was dark as Katy in a scowl when we set out, and like a liquid sun-beam when we landed here."

There was such genuine frankness in Marion's look and tone as she prattled in her old artless way, such confidence that I would admire the device by which she had outwitted those who would have kept her from me, that I could not censure her: her manner too—I knew not how—was more in accordance with my wishes than it had been the day before; the slight tremor of her accent was increased, rendering her unutterably endearing; she evidently attached no importance to this exploit, but seemed to view it in the light of her former flittings to the witch's sheeling before the lark was up; yet I wished to make her understand that Sanford should not have been suffered to attend her—the hint was delicate—I hesitated.

"What are you thinking of Walter?"

"That Helen may be uneasy at your absence, Marion, and"—

"Oh, Kitty went to impart my freak, and my intention of breakfasting with *you*—with

Granny's cloak," she added, laughing, "we stole her basket, stocked with dainties for her pet; the moment we espied Mr. Fielding on the causeway we slid into the school-room, and laid out breakfast—come."

While we breakfasted Marion in her jocund way touched off our old adventures, but I remarked she never introduced Quinilla. I was longing to get over my unpleasant hint respecting Sanford, and *à propos* of something very foreign to the subject, said, "Sanford I suppose is off with William Driscoll; I wish he were off altogether," and then fearful of displeasing her, I added hastily, "Fielding will breakfast at the cottage."

Marion colored. "I took good care that mischief-maker should not see me; we watched till he was out of sight."

"Mischief-maker! the man who saved our lives!"

"Did he save yours?" ejaculated Marion, "then I forgive him."

"Forgive him, Marion, has he injured you?"

"He is always reproaching Mr. Sanford, Walter, he wants him to go away before his

wound is cured. My aunt was pitiful to a worm once ! but Mr. Fielding is the cause—and then he is for ever watching me, and setting Grace to watch me, and Kitty Driscoll—all because he thinks that Mr. Sanford likes to speak to me ; 'tis no wonder that he should : *I* give him a kind word—that Fielding wishes to destroy him."

"Is it Sanford who interprets Fielding's conduct thus, Marion ? and are you his confidant ?"

"I am the only one who has a spark of pity for that ill-treated creature," cried Marion vehemently ; "the others turn from him as if he were a murderer instead of being nearly murdered himself, unfortunate young man ! even Helen !—he declares that even Helen has joined with Mr. Fielding in urging him to go—he is not fit to go—his wound will open—he told me so ! was ever any thing so barbarous !"

"Marion," said I, "it is possible you are deceived ; I myself saw Fielding watching like a brother at Sanford's bedside."

"Oh ! they have *turned you* completely," said

Marion, flushing the deepest crimson—"he has not a friend in the wide world.—And he is ill—very ill.—You used to be kind-hearted, Walter—Mr. Sanford will die—he told me he should die, if they persist in sending him away."

"And do you credit all that he affirms, Marion? do you regard this stranger, the acquaintance of a few months, more than the friends who—"

"More than I do you, and aunt, and Helen," interrupted Marion eagerly;—"no, no! I did not care a straw for him, until I thought that he was dead—and then Walter, I felt I could have died a thousand times to—Was it my fault, Walter? was it!" She seized my hand and gasped for breath, her eyes emitting that same mysterious gleam which had harrowed me the day before.

"He was justly punished," I exclaimed; "Why did he deceive Quinilla?"

"Don't name her, don't name her," cried Marion, "it makes me dark! it makes me—oh, I do so hate her!"

Every word she uttered encreased my indig-

nation against Sanford. "*She is the deceiver,*" said Marion, pacing the room with rapid steps; "we all believed her tales! her falsehood! it *was* false Walter! it *was*?—Mr. Sanford never loved her; never said he loved her—But there was a falsehood worse than that—I'll tell you, and then you'll hate her too—she said I was an artful hypocrite, that I wanted to marry Mr. Sanford! now don't you hate her Walter?"

"But he is going; no one can accuse you when he is gone."

"And if he goes, he dies!—he told me so this very morning."

"You would not detain him—would you Marion? you do not—love him?"

The change in Marion's aspect was so extraordinary and so instantaneous, that I stood considering her intently, half wavering in my scepticism as to the existence of demoniacs—Had some capricious essence been transfused into my sister?—every trace of anger vanished from her countenance—she sat down, leaned her head upon her hand and said, thoughtfully, "Kitty Driscoll is very happy—she is very happy, happier than she was before she married—Mr. San-

ford bade me observe how happy Kitty is ! 'tis only having some one else to love—'tis only having some one else to love," she repeated, sinking again into a reverie.

I could assign no reason for these fitful moods, save the dreaded one—attachment to Sanford; but could love excite to passion, prejudice and hatred, a mind like Marion's? All the endearing qualities of her former joyous nature stood out more brightly as contrasted with the darkened picture of her present state of mind; I looked at her almost angrily, while she seemed lost in meditation; at length, heaving a deep sigh, she ejaculated, "I should be eternally wretched if I destroyed him."

"Marion," said I, bitterly, "was it to express your anxieties for Mr. Sanford that you came to me? was it to impart a resolution that will break my heart?"

"Break *your* heart, Walter! I would rather break my own!—Is there a fairy spell upon me?—Am I born to work evil?—How I wish I was in Heaven! yes," she resumed after a moment's pause, "I wish we were all there."—She threw her arm round my neck. "Do

you remember, Walter, how we used to sit whole hours and picture Heaven, and think what a beautiful world it must be if it were more beautiful than this world—How we used to wonder whether the roof it wears could be more splendid than our sky, or whether the floor could be more lovely than our carpeting of heaths! We used to say that only angels deserved to inhabit a world so beautiful as this is; and oh! how I have worshipped with my whole, whole, heart, that Great Spirit who gave us skies, and lakes, and flowers, so surpassing lovely! He must be wonderful, I thought who could invent a region more enchanting still; and often, Walter, I have wished to see him, if all of you could see him with me."

"But *now* Marion," said I, "*now* you would wish for others in your Paradise."

"Every one," cried Marion earnestly; "I wish every one to see that everlasting wonder: and, lately, I have longed more than ever to behold Him; for I dreamed of Heaven two nights ago, and since that dream the face of all things here seems changed—I am not happy as I used to be, not the whole day long—I want

to fly again through stars, and moons, and suns, and talk to those bright creatures!—They did not look as you do—not reproachful—they coaxed me forward—I wished to turn and call you and Helen, but they led me on with such a smile! What wondrous scenery! the loveliest fairy-land we ever imaged was nothing to compare to it!—what waterfalls! rapid yet noiseless; hushed by the presence of the Eternal. Helen's little flock was there, wreathed with rings of dazzling stars. I was so sorry when I awoke!"

While Marion described these shapings of her dream, the melancholy, pious, child-like expression of her deep blue eyes, was inconceivably affecting. "You are more a visionary than ever my dear Marion," I observed.

"'Tis very true," said Marion; "I am always roving now to other worlds: but sometimes Walter, sometimes," she shuddered, darting a swift, piercing look around the chamber, "Walter I am sometimes led away by other beings—not human—not angelic—with such fixed eyes—leaden—and unwinking lids—and faces so unnaturally calm!—they neither frown,

nor smile, nor ever change their solemn footfall—but on they go—still on, through mouldering tombs, and I between them—at every step increasing iciness pervades me, as if I were freezing inch by inch into a statue; 'tis horrid to feel your heart grow into marble; your very breath becoming solid! I struggle to free myself—the chill figures moan, 'it is your doom! you have destroyed a fellow-creature.'

I gazed at her with a heart-sinking I had never felt till then; every feature was swollen and distorted.

"But the most terrible of all," she whispered, "the most terrible of all, is when I find myself, indeed, hearsed in cold, cold, stone, and forced to stand between my sullen guards: I see you all—*you*, Helen, every one I love—I see you all led onward by those moving statues; led on to take your death-stand at my side—I try to burst my solid flesh—I try to lift a hand—to raise a warning finger—I can not—I can not! my voice is forced to echo theirs—to moan that withering curse—'It is your doom! you have destroyed a fellow-creature'." She fell senseless on my arm.

A thought so horrible flashed across my brain that for very agony I screamed aloud to hasten approaching footsteps, afraid of being suffered for a moment to harbour the suspicion—"She is dying," I exclaimed, "she is—Fielding save me from distraction!"

"Hush!" said Fielding snatching her from me, "be firm—the worst is over—this will pass away."

"Is she?" I gasped, "is she?—oh have mercy! speak the truth."

"Her mind has wandered—certainly—but the worst is over—such hallucinations are not serious;—hers can be accounted for by obvious causes—the recent shock—nerves tenderly susceptible—the derangement is but partial."

"Derangement!"

"Be cautious—she revives—if she become conscious of her aberration I cannot answer for the consequence. She has imbibed singular impressions and antipathies, which, if not noticed, will in time subside—I have seen many thus affected, and restored—caution is essential—indeed she is not incurable—indeed she is not." He took my hand and pressed it cordi-

ally. "I would not deceive you Walter, you know I would not—come—we must get her home. Helen is on the causeway—call her."

I stood rooted, watching the dawn of consciousness which succeeded Marion's frightfully vacant stare.

"Assist me, pray assist me," said Fielding; "rouse yourself—call Helen: indeed the aberration is passing fast away—Marion *now* is simply incoherent; indulgence, quiet, prevention of excitement, will effect a cure; the disease is not inherent; it is merely accidental—were it hereditary—"

He continued to speak, but I was deaf and paralysed; smote as by the desolating blight which struck the disobedient—the mystery that had harassed me so long was by a lightning thought at once revealed—we were inheritors of madness!

CHAPTER VII.

Our barren years are past ;
Be this of life the first, of sloth the last.

Statius.

I KNOW not how long I remained in a state of stupor ; my friend's remonstrances aroused me — Marion was gone. I listened to Fielding for awhile with indifference, occupied only by gloomy presages of an inavertable calamity ; but his energy at last fixed my attention, and the unusual sternness of his countenance overawed me. He finished a forcible appeal by the following memorable words. " You have hitherto dreamed away existence, and had circum-

stances remained unchanged you might have dozed on in guiltless and contented lethargy. But circumstances *have* changed; and high, and powerful, and honorable incentives must prevail with you—there are more exalted aims than the selfish ambition of literary repose, and nobler enjoyments than the gratification of domestic affections, however amiable and well directed. You are called on to protect those who have protected you—to aid in their support—to act the comforter. Will you disappoint their hope, their almost solitary hope?—Your uncle is destitute—his agent has absconded with all that he possessed.”

I bore this intelligence with a calmness that astonished me: it seemed as if the sudden insight I had obtained of the calamity which menaced us had annihilated feeling. Imperceptibly, however, his communication formed, what Fielding had intended, (without, indeed, suspecting the extreme cause of my stupefaction) a countercheck to the shock which had occasioned my mental paralysis.

“Your uncle’s misfortunes,” resumed Fielding, viewing me fixedly, as if to limit his dis-

closure to my strength of mind, "are aggravated by duplicity and ingratitude; he has become liable to the penalty of a heavy bond in which he had joined as a security for a treacherous friend—he has been—arrested."

"Arrested!"

"I have ascertained the extent of his embarrassment," went on Fielding; "it may subject him to a long imprisonment; he is resigned, and only anxious for his family. I never saw misfortune met with such unostentatious firmness."

This tribute to my uncle's worth caused a salutary revulsion of feeling.

"But," pursued Fielding, "I have witnessed traits of unconscious heroism in this wild glen which might form a romance for more sophisticated circles. I have seen cruel and unlooked for reverses borne by a gentle girl without complaint, almost without a tear: the sharpest tests dauntlessly encountered; the humblest offices fulfilled with cheerfulness, and the burden of complicated duties so lightly carried that but for my previous knowledge of your family I should have thought your sister's fortitude was

the result of life-long trial. To what enduring constancy may not high moral excellence raise a tender, delicate woman ! the votaries of glittering accomplishments would look in vain for their coveted applause if contrasted with Helen. Your aunt too, humble and untaught, surpasses in the wisdom which moral strength bestows the brightest of your sages. The letter conveying intelligence of her husband's arrest arrived in the very hour which might have seen her brother amenable to the charge of murder ; these thunder-claps were followed by Marion's mental alienation and your illness—she had contending duties to decide between—she chose the most imperative but the most severe ; she stayed with her adopted children."

Fielding took no notice of my keen emotion ; it appeared as if he had tried to induce tears.

" But there is still another in my catalogue of the wise and gentle—how loveable is woman fulfilling pleasantly her social duties ; I could forgive a second choice of my father if it fell on Grace McQuillan !—I could make love to her myself," added Fielding, with a half-smile, " but for the fear of your resentment. Grace

met the brunt of mischief gallantly; a veteran in expedient; never astonished or disheartened: as cool in cases of emergency as if the business of life were to heal wounds and heart-aches. She boldly took charge of all my patients, under guidance of your Ballygobbin Esculapius, when I visited your uncle: I was not absent long, for the physic of the mind was necessary, and this her medical ally could not impart."

"Oh Fielding," I exclaimed, "you were the son, the brother, while I—"

"While you were suffering, partly from constitutional infirmity, partly from your own imprudence—You see I am not used to glozing, Walter; when will you learn to control impulses which render you the victim of every shade that flits across the scene? your sister's malady is a fraction in the amount of misfortune you are called upon to mitigate."

"Do you account so lightly, loss of reason?" I ejaculated.

"*Can* I undervalue the gift that opens to our hope an immortality in which all the channels of disease and suffering find a termination?" replied Fielding—"Next to loss of rectitude I

count loss of reason the most grievous ill to which mortality is liable : but why do you persist in viewing evil through a magnifying medium ? I am a better physician than a painter Walter ; I have made the causes of insanity a peculiar study, and I repeat that Marion's wandering is curable ; tranquillity, employment, the removal of certain persons who keep up her excitement, will effect an entire restoration—such was my hope even when her mania wore a violent and stubborn character."

Avowal was upon my tongue, but I remembered Helen, and restrained myself ; Helen was unconscious of our terrible inheritance ; why should I, by divulging it, render *her* too an object of compassion ?

Fielding resumed—"Marion is dependent on you as on others for the observances which I require ; watchful attendance, unshaken firmness, tenderness as unrelaxing, have brought her to her present state of convalescence. Do not be outdone, by a mere girl, in self-control—brace yourself to meet all changes tranquilly—your aunt is preparing for removal ; you will have to enter on a novel course ; *friends* may be

found to forward you—This disclosure has relieved me from a painful part of the duty I am bound to: I must leave you now to remonstrate with a person more unpersuadable I fear than you are—reflect on my advice—you cannot free your uncle from embarrassment, but you can contribute to his support—a powerful stimulus is necessary to counteract your train of feeling and of habit: your family exigencies present such a stimulus; let them be to you the medicine of the mind, and you will thus convert to solid benefit these troublous accidents.” He left me.

I paced the room, too confused to form a clear judgment of our actual situation. I tried to view in its various shadowings the picture of distress which Fielding had portrayed, but I could not think—I could not think—my faculties seemed withered! Those who are menaced with a train of evil for which in their own conduct they can find no obvious grounds, are often tempted to overlook the necessary connexion between cause and effect, and to insert, for natural sequences, the mystic-working power of an overruling fatality—A feeling rebellious

to a doom considered unmerited was called forth, to the exclusion of Fielding's representations. Madness, even in the mitigated form under which I had recently beheld it, was appalling; but I had witnessed it under a yet more hideous aspect.—A miserable decrepid creature, once living near our glen, and known as the maniac of the mountain, had been afflicted with lycanthropy, a species of madness which transfuses the properties of beasts into the human system. This haggard wretch, grisly and ferocious, now passed before my imagination: involuntarily I imitated the wolfish howl with which he used to scare the timid children; damp thrills shook my frame, the chamber walls seemed collapsing, and closing in around me—Did I behold my future semblance in this monster?

In agony of spirit I was tempted to arraign such mysterious dispensations—was mercy then but partial? Divine benevolence a sophism? I remembered having questioned my good aunt upon the subject of this maniac: her wholesome argument recurred: 'are we, who have no right to life at all, to arraign the laws of God, to ask why some are strait and some are crip-

ples? as well may we enquire why we have not angels' wings and angels' sinless natures! that stunted maniac may stand before the wise ones of the earth in Paradise: no awful voice will call him to a reckoning!

I followed eagerly the train of inference this reasoning gave rise to; Marion! my poor Marion! was not responsible for her new-born errors. Reflection was accompanied by another assuasive; her love for Sanford might have no firmer hold than had her hatred for Quinilla, and both sentiments might prove mere transitory impressions in this partial oblivion of her former state of feeling. She was recovering; Fielding had avouched it; and he was one of those I never doubted; it was then possible that even when inherent this disease might be controlled. A vow passed my lips never voluntarily, to leave my sisters. We would be obedient to a fiat that had its origin in benevolence. The very circumstance that cut us off from other ties drew us closer to each other. I would pursue the most toilsome avocation, submit to drudgery the most servile, but I would reserve the privilege of guarding them;

we would all three labour patiently, untiringly, but together; our earnings should be consecrated to those who had protected us. How often, without any virtual alteration in the ills we muse upon, are our souls lifted from despondence to serenity! a few minutes before, and my mind seemed to have taken a decidedly mournful direction: suddenly a mountain weight of anguish was removed; I became calm enough to consider how I might, as Grace had recommended, 'learn an honest calling, something solid which should turn to account upon a rainy day.' Of the ways which were to lead to this desirable end I was profoundly ignorant,—I had not even a dim idea of practical occupation.—A 'poor scholar' deserves his epithet; in exigencies like the present his store of antiquated learning is less available than the craft of the humblest mechanic. I had not strength for manual labour; I had often tried to dig, but the employment was as uncongenial to my bodily as to my mental capabilities. Of modern trade or traffic I knew no more than I had caught from Grace McQuillan's items of her monthly barter at

Bally-Gobbin : the term machinery caused a constipation of ideas ; the simple revolutions of a water-wheel, and the complex movements of a steam-engine, would have equally puzzled and distracted me.

To follow the higher paths to fortune, pointed out by Madame Wallenberg, would part me from my family ; in fact I had no certain indication of their course, and for the fine arts I adjudged myself without taste or genius.

There was one thing favorable ; I had no extravagances to unlearn—we had been early taught the riches of frugality, to squander nothing that we might bestow ; a generous economy was practised by my uncle ; we were as unacquainted with luxury as with poverty ; the latter, it is true, had been in our own persons so little contemplated that for some time I found a difficulty in believing we were poor, actually poor—nay penniless and in debt—more destitute than the wretched cottiers for whose relief we had learned to curtail the slight indulgences of childhood. But though our fare was frugal it was neither coarse nor niggardly ; it had its relish from my good_aunt's

thriftness though it lacked dainty condiments: we knew nothing of privation, hardship, servitude,—yet we must bend to these, and help to lighten the dreary prospect now unfolding.

While pondering thus, I left the ruin and walked mechanically to the islet-point above the creek. I sat down upon the jetty and continued to ruminate on the methods of acquiring what I had never coveted till then. The ripples of the bay playing round Driscoll's boat abstracted my ideas, at least my sober ones, which appeared to float off with the current, leaving my mind to the influence of fantastic speculations, whose scope was, to establish El Dorado schemes for liberating my uncle. Accidents without a shade of probability were presented to my imagination; the visions of the alchymist, fairy-gifts, dreams of buried treasure, the goblin tales of childhood were revived, with their wishing-caps, and magic lamps, and diamond valleys. I felt half credulous of the wild suggestion that I might become the Fortunatus of some golden coast—a jump into the boat put all my magic squad to flight.

"'Tis a raw day, Master Walter, for you to face without a hat," cried William Driscol, flourishing his oar: "we were glad to our hearts to hear the fever left you, Sir."

"Are you for home or for the headland, William—will you ferry me across?"

"I'm waiting here for Mr. Sanford, Sir; *his-self* is waiting too, for somebody I b'lieve; may be you haven't seen Miss Marion, Sir?"

The voice of Sanford, hailing Driscol, made me spring towards the ruin with more alacrity than I had ever exercised before—but Sanford was already near, my only chance of avoiding his recognition was to ascend the ivy ladder—this I performed with a fleetness that amazed me—I sat down to recover breath and to rejoice at my escape. I could not think of this young man without a rankling uneasiness: but for him, and the train of mischiefs he had introduced, Marion's malady perhaps had remained dormant. The creek was just beneath my window and I eagerly watched for his departure; he was already in the boat when Fielding appeared and called to him; I observed them slowly winding round the building until a buttress hid them.

As I was on the point of emerging from my rookery I distinguished footsteps, and to my inexpressible annoyance the voices of Fielding and his companion sounded from the outer chamber. The very commencement of their dialogue took from me the power of motion; I was fixed by astonishment, my arm half extended to withdraw the curtain: there was a sudden cessation of mental processes; my reason seemed to pause: I do protest that for several moments I suspected that my vagrant fancy was playing off a juggle, to revive my foregoing illusions of fairy-craft and transmutation.

CHAPTER VIII.

Be just in all you say, and all you do ;
Whatever be your birth, you're sure to be
A Peer of the first magnitude to me.

Juv.

YOUR subterfuge for such delay is worn out, my lord," said Fielding; "your excuses are contradictory and inconclusive. Your object in this pursuit remains doubtful as before."

"Your own purposes appear to me as questionable, Mr. Fielding," replied Sanford.

"They do not, my lord," said Fielding, emphatically; "they cannot. My purposes are undisguised; to evade an honest question you shuffle and prevaricate."

"A gentlemanlike courtesy might have softened your insulting accusation, Sir. I consider

you bound to me for the honorable satisfaction I shall demand."

"Lord Sanford," replied Fielding, "you will demand it vainly. Proclaim my abhorrence of honorable homicide if you will—my code of honor is engraven on a less changeable material than the world's opinion. I repeat, the satisfaction misnamed honorable, will not be granted you by me."

"Neither," retorted Sanford, "will I accord to you the satisfaction you require."

"Then I have an open course to follow," said Fielding. "The deception in which you so unwarrantably made me a participator shall be instantly exposed."

"With your fixed principles of honor," returned Sanford, "it is extraordinary that our respective ranks in life should have been so long concealed. The *deception*, as you term it, had its origin in a simple *badinage*; it was continued from motives you shall not force me to avow—give them what cast you please; I am indifferent: but again I would suggest that your own motives for remaining here assume as questionable a coloring as mine."

“Your conscience disavows your double charge, my lord. Could any one gifted with humanity desert this little household in their distress? Retrace the circumstances of our fellowship. Accident made us travelling companions; the ease and freedom of a tour, prosecuted without the trammels of that observance which retinue and rank impose, were cordially enjoyed by both; our tastes and habits seemed congenial—it was not until I heard you palm what I conceived to be a purposeless fiction on an unsuspecting family that I found you held too lightly the restraint which truth imposes. The sequel gave rise to a still more grave suspicion.”

“Upon my soul,” said Sanford, laughing, “I cannot, even for the respect I bear such matter-of-fact philosophy, I cannot resist a vulgar propensity to the comic when I review that inimitable catastrophe!—Venus rising from a duck pond! ‘wafting odours to the wind!’—The scene could only be surpassed by the exquisite *denouement*—Dido reviling poor innocent Eneas, and exhorting her bull-headed Midas to the judgment!—Spite of his sword’s uncivil

injuries I can hug the memory of that Hibernian Furioso: 'tis the key to mirth; neither blister nor rough bandaging could rust it!—Were it not for the *ultimate*, which turned out more tragical than pleasant, and might have untimely ended my 'strange eventful history,' I could conjure up this drama on occasion to drive off black spirits and blue.—But I cry pardon for this digression—pray go on—you stopped at 'grave suspicion.' ”

Fielding's tone showed no disturbance at his companion's raillery. “This grave suspicion was excited by your covert admiration of—”

“Covert admiration!” echoed Sanford.—“My admiration of Marion was visible enough. Could any but the infatuated conceive that my devotion to that diabolical old Dido was sincere?—But go on, go on.”

“It was so conceived by those too honest to be incredulous,” said Fielding. “Your admiration, I would observe, of a girl so simple and so beautiful—”

“Enough of that, if you expect a listener,” said Sanford. “You may call one merely woman ‘beautiful’—Marion is a human seraph!”

—reserve your cold encomia for her sister.—
How suddenly your remonstrances for our departure were remitted, when you became domesticated with that sybil namesake of the Greek enchantress !”

“ Is your appetite for banter satisfied my lord ?”

“ I do not banter ‘ *by my ancesthers !*’ If Helen did not teach you to forgive poor fallible man an involuntary lapse, by making yourself a participator in the transgression, why, I would ask, why your sudden tolerance of what you had so strenuously condemned ?”

“ Simply because I found the plan which I suspected you of forming could not succeed.”

“ I would remark upon the candour of such a suspicion, Mr. Fielding, and then I would enquire, why might not the plan succeed which I infer that *you* infer, was so unholy ?”

“ Because temptation, in order to succeed, must find some congenial soil to sow its poison in, and there was no such soil in Marion’s mind. I discarded all my apprehensions when I knew her ; therefore I waited patiently till

you should also find your plan was futile. I could have defied you to pervert that mind, guileless as a child's, yet pure as angel's.— Yes, I could have defied you to lure your seraph from her Paradise !”

“ Thanks for the implication,” exclaimed Sanford ; “ ’tis generous to discover a man’s meaning ; it saves the person thus benevolently interpreted a world of pondering. I might have been puzzled to make out the drift of my intentions. But if my seraph be thus temptation-proof why would you scare away the crest-fallen deluder ? To be exiled after being baffled is punishment supererogatory ; why not let the serpent crawl a little longer through the Eden you appropriate ; just for amendment of his nature.”

“ When your enquiries assume that serious tone the subject merits I will reply my lord.”

“ There are more problems in the human mind than even your sagacious theory can solve,” returned Sanford ; “ but for the present I waive irrelevant discussion. Seriously then I ask, why am I again importuned to give

up an intercourse most sweet and pleasant, if Marion be impenetrable to the blandishment you accuse me of employing?"

"Because her mind is now untuned," said Fielding. "You know it is—you know that you retard its cure. Have you a spark of generous feeling? Think upon her family—recall the simple honesty with which they trusted your professions. They thought you poor when they admitted you—were you less hospitably treated?—They found you frivolous and heartless, abusing their generous confidence, ridiculing a weak and therefore pitiable woman; yet they nursed you with a mother's and a sister's tenderness. The offender was forgotten; they only saw in you the stranger helpless and disabled. Your accident was caused by your own levity; was it fair to practise such inconsiderate mockery?—Has your conduct ever been arraigned? Has Helen or her aunt ever cancelled the merit of her conduct by reproach?—Yet their misfortunes might well have excused a lack of hospitality.—Poverty, sudden and complete—one beloved relative immured within a prison—another waking from insensi-

bility to delirium—Walter's death hourly anticipated—obliged to a dependant, as they thought and still imagine, for their daily food ! —Did these distresses close their hearts against you ;—did they remit one look of kindness ? control one generous impulse to soften your confinement with indulgences purchased by their self-denial ? They ask nothing in return but forbearance—I have assured them you can travel without risk. Leave them. Even now I come from them to intercede for your instant departure. A trying scene has been the consequence of this morning's giddy adventure—Marion has relapsed."

" Marion !—have you seen her ? I left her but a few hours ago in perfect health and loveliness. Is she really ill ?"

" My lord you know that her mind is disordered."

" But not materially ; you yourself have assured me the derangement would be transient—has she ?—is she ?—say any thing."

" I can neither answer for her reason nor her life if she be thus incessantly excited.—Why do you haunt her with pathetic tales of your

distress?—her feelings are intense—too intense. She suffers even now from a paroxysm brought on by your exaggerated representations.”

“ But she will recover : do not torture me ! ”

“ She had almost recovered when you furtively renewed your equivocal addresses. A few erroneous fantasies alone remained, which time and change of scene would have corrected—On these very points you beset her—If your pursuit be not insidious what name does it deserve ? ”

“ Honorable !—You start Mr. Fielding—That epithet seems to have been overlooked in the terms you applied to my intentions.”

“ One naturally associates guilt with mystery Lord Sanford—Truly there are problems in the human mind which no philosophy can reach—I beg your pardon, frankly, if I have wronged you ; but in excuse I plead the simplicity of a candid dealer—If you meant fairly, why a counterfeit ?—Why cheat a silly woman ? ”

“ Why ?—for mirth, or for caprice, or for experiment.—Perhaps I would determine how far old Dido’s vanity might lead her—perhaps I would enjoy a farce, or form a subject for a

comedy—You are fond of drawing inferences; I pray you invent one—I might have wished to win in humble guise my mountain maiden; I might have had no aim at all; but now at last I *am* decided.—I will marry Marion.”

“The decision is rather arrogantly expressed Lord Sanford; you seem secure of her affections.”

“Had I no other sanction for my confidence, your allegation Mr. Fielding might supply one—Have you not ascribed her malady to anxiety for me?”

“Certainly: her moral sense is wounded; she forms conclusions on mistaken grounds; she believes you are ill-treated, and is impressed by an idea, which she incessantly asks us to confute, that she caused the accident from which you suffered—whether her consequent disturbance and remorse might not have been as lively were its object her blind minstrel, is yet to be discovered.”

“You are complimentary Sir.”

“And perhaps mistaken. I would only have you suspend your declaration until Marion’s faculties shall resume their tone: her compas-

sion is now unnaturally strained ; we shall see if her affection be as severely tried.—Leave her for awhile—the interval you may employ in dispassionately considering the importance of a step decided on, I fear, without reflection. You have a brother whose eldership of more than twenty years invests him with almost a paternal charter to direct you—he is childless ; of course you are his representative.—May not his opinion merit a little deference ?”

“Oh ! he is ruled by my imperial sister-in-law, whom one would imagine a descendant of the Czars ! she shakes the sceptre even over me ; but then for my allegiance she vouchsafes me her particular regard. Lord Dellival married a portionless foreigner some fifteen years ago ; he cannot therefore twit me on the score of prudence. Moreover ever since he lost his children he manifests a feverish impatience to behold new sureties for the transmission of our ancient name. My Irish snow-drop will present our fashionable Amphyctyons as fair excuse for folly as *his* exotic.”

“For the very reason that you call it folly, it would be wise to reconsider it, but not under

the influence of Marion's fascinations. Quit the glen, return to your courtly sphere, and ask yourself whether your snow-drop could be transplanted, safely, to such a soil."

"Quit the glen!—not without Marion—I am sworn to this!—You are a more impracticable logician than even the O'Toole—Your remonstrance seemed directed to induce compunction, and at the turnstile of repentance you would send me back to all my ancient levities!"

"I would have you consider these levities a barrier between yourself and Marion—'Tis for *her* sake that I contend; she would find rank and influence poor palliatives for an ill-assorted union."

"There are discrepancies, I grant you, in birth and circumstances; but—"

"Tush!—your aristocracy of place would be well repaid by Marion's aristocracy of sentiment—I did not contemplate such distinctions—Your minds have no affinities."

"Sage expounder, will you interpret us?"

"Willingly my Lord—*You* are an airy, versatile, aspiring, somewhat selfish, somewhat

supercilious, man of fashion ! a lover and a friend just as it suits your passion or convenience ; high-bred, in the usual acceptation of the word ; the leader of a school which, though jealous of its light-spun honor, sometimes sanctions in favor of its particular cynosures slight deviations from vulgar, common-place integrity—In better circumstances, by which I mean, morally healthier, you might have been a better man.”

“Bravo ; we thank you, O’Toole himself could not have executed a fairer, *by which I mean* a fouler home-thrust—Now for my mountain maiden.”

“Marion is unambitious, unaccomplished, genuine, unselfish ; full of kind affections ; nestling joyously amid the sharers of her sympathies ; attached to the very homeliness of home ; linked by a powerful feeling to the soil that nurtured her, to the humble friends whose poverty calls forth the simple charities she delights in. Marion would wither beneath the artificial atmosphere of your exotics. She would find no opiate for her mind’s affliction in

the turmoil of vapid competition. 'Tis not disparity of birth it is disparity of mind, Lord Sanford, that makes unhappy unions."

"Pray Sir," said Sanford, "may I assume that the same disparity does not exist between Marion's sister and Sir William Fielding's son?"

"Nor yet between Helen Fitzgerald and Lord Sanford," replied Fielding.—"You look astonished;—there are indeed distinctions—marked distinctions, but not so irreconcilable; Helen would try to raise you to her standard; Marion would cling in secret to her old prepossessions, but would not dare to express her dissent from your opinion."

"Pray continue, Mr. Fielding."

"Helen, too, has more ambition than her sister, but it is so finely tempered that it adds another charm to her character. She would move undazzled in your orbit. The one, fanciful, sensitive, and enthusiastic, is fashioned for her own wilds alone; the other, with taste and genius, with feelings as deep and fervent, but better governed, could conform to any station

without compromising by a single weakness, her dignity or her integrity."

"Therefore my peccant habits would be railed at by the one, and kindly winked at by the other."

"Not kindly; Marion's spirit would disclaim alliance with the worldly as faithfully as Helen's: if she loves you, 'tis because you practise here, it may be for a purpose, those virtues native to her mind."

"There your definition is at fault; those virtues are native to *my* mind also, and shoot up spontaneous on occasion. I am fond of doing good when I have nothing else to do. As to your rare analysis, it has not dissuaded me one tittle—were it only to demonstrate that your portraits of me and Marion are sheer daubery, I would persist.—Do you think my mountain-maid will be indifferent to the homage she must win?—Do you think *any* maid, wife, or widow, ever trod this labyrinthian world *reproachless* without the aid of vanity?—'Tis their sex-preserver!"

"I have said that Marion is not formed for your labyrinthian world. You forget her

simple training. She knows not one of those accomplishments which nurture vanity. To your gilded canopies she would prefer the shadow of her alder trees, and a garland of heath-flowers to a coronet."

"Suspend your verdict for awhile. You shall hear the lovely Lady Sanford quoted. The current ore of our *exclusives* shall bear her impress: her graceful blunders will supersede our high-tone jargon. A few lessons from Fanny Berrington, and Marion will imbibe that essence of elegance, caprice, and carelessness comprised in the word *fashion*."

"Fanny Berrington is not a pupil of your school."

"Not willingly," said Sanford laughing—
"She would rather belong to yours; but, in despite of her, her *air enjoué* assigns her to our giddy clique. Therefore I shall claim her tutelage for Marion.—Fanny will infuse grace—Lady Dellival dignity."

"Lady Dellival!—Beneath her influence poor Marion would render up her right to think that she was right, and die of heart-ache!—I have seen the Marchioness—I know

her also by report—Marion—The Marchioness—What a companionship!”

“ I confess,” said Sanford, “ the dove and eagle would be kindlier mated.—My lady lords it bravely !—Still she has held her supereminence scathless ; the most searching beam has never made her blink. I am proud of my sister-in-law and rejoice that she preserves her autocracy unassailed.”

“ Because she is your sister-in-law ; it flatters your self-complacency.”

“ I seldom analyze the motive of my likings, Mr. Fielding ; I am no philosopher. As to the Marchioness, I was so young when she became my brother’s wife that I fell under her domination naturally. I might respect her for supplying my mother’s place, if not tenderly, carefully, as regards myself ; and as regards my family, irreproachably—She never names her own—thence I conclude her pride takes its spring from other circumstances than noble birth—She is just the woman to forget her family name, unless it were emblazoned.”

“ Lady Dellival is not the single instance of a woman lowly born and portionless, bearing

her palmy honors with overweening haughtiness."

"She bears them as she ought; her name never was, nor ever will be, on the tarnished list. If our revenues are not augmented by her dower, at least they are not squandered upon poor relations. She keeps these poverty-revivers wisely in the back ground. Therefore I have long ago forgotten the little that I heard of her."

"Perhaps the scenes of infancy can find no comfortable place in her remembrance."

"Her emotions of the past certainly are not vivid," returned Sanford. "She never reverts to matters bearing date before her marriage with my brother, who is himself laconic on the subject of his lady's past adventures. But then the Marchioness, by obvious calculation must be verging upon forty, a period when women seldom boast retention of infantile events. Their 'pleasures of memory,' then, are laid upon the shelf.—Besides, the Marchioness is a woman who, I suspect, has never let the vulgar look into her heart; not even when she lost her children—two boys; my brother

mourns them still.—If his wife sheds tears they must be shed in secret for no one ever sees them.”

“ And is Marion, with all her home-attachments, to fall under the domination, as you aptly style it, of such a heartless woman ? ”

“ Your epithets are civil, Mr. Fielding ; but philosophy excuseth a multitude of rudenesses. Despite your prejudice the Marchioness is admired, and I esteem every woman amiable who is admired ; illogical people are glad to base their judgment on the world’s opinion. Perhaps you think that Helen would be a neophyte more worthy Lady Dellival.”

“ Helen ! ”

“ You smile, but let us put it to the proof ; I make Marion Lady Sanford, and transport her to the capital. Helen will accompany her sister. How long will their young heads withstand the battery of admiration ?—not the waning of a moon !—Nay I set my marquise against your Baronetcy *unpresumptive*, that in one little week both sisters will forget their rocks and camlet robes, pigs, daisies, knitting-pins, old pipers, naked footed

pages, whortleberry tarts, and elderberry wine."

"Pray exhaust your irony my lord; have you plans for any other of the family?"

"Yes, most philanthropic ones. I will get the O'Toole appointed Headsman in ordinary to Platoff, and wed old Dido to Fanfaron, my *homme d'atour*, a pretty fellow and very sentimental."

"That you may have leisure to arrange your liberalities, my lord, I wish you a good morning."

"Stop Mr. Fielding: you look indignant; if you take notes cynical of *my* friends, you should excuse my notes critical of *yours*.— Seriously I mean to ask for that sweet Marion this very hour, and thus to balance my score of obligations. When Helen is my sister you shall have our vote and interest; of course you are secure of her affections."

"I have not the excuse for vanity your lordship's personal attractions give, neither am I accustomed lightly to discuss a delicate woman's feelings. I hoped when I began this subject to lead you to a graver state of mind, more

suitable to the present crisis. You seem to have forgotten that Marion's health is delicate, her reason tottering—"

"Hush!—you shall predict evil of me, of my *belle sœur*, of any one but Marion. I acknowledge my obliquities, and tender the *amende*. She shall be my wife to-day if the aunt please, (there will be no obstacle in that quarter I conjecture). Come; presto! no demur. I do not wish to take a night-view of the *mésalliance*."

"I wish you would my lord. Consider her state of mind—her uncle's situation."

"His difficulties are too serious for me to ponder on; I leave him and them to your philanthropy, with a caution—Beware of being too profuse; Sir William may cut you off for squandering his ingots."

"Is it just to seek the house of mourning in such a trifling mood, to—"

"Spare your sermon Mr. Fielding—I must imp my feeble wing to carry off my Marion. How the aunt's eyes will glisten! The licence will be here at day-break, borne by fleet Mistress Mulligan or one of her attendants, liveried in flesh-color. Come; else I go alone, and

then you lose the *scena*. What a riot of exhilaration!—the naked-footed pages will split our auditory!—*allons!*—Ha! Walter! I'm heartily glad to see you."

I had listened to the commencement of the foregoing dialogue with an obliteration of self so complete, that I could not be held accountable, on moral grounds, for any act committed during this temporary suspension of my identity. I have since experienced the same wonderment and absorption at a well sustained dramatic dialogue, devouring the speeches of the actors, mindful only of the plot. But as the strange-conference proceeded I began to feel twilight conception of actual things;—the process was slow, however, which brought me to the dawn.

When Sanford declared he would marry my sister my limbs were unloosed, and, with equal confusion of sense and indistinctness of purpose, I drew back the curtain. The speakers were ensconced in the window recess. Like a cautious somnambulist I emerged, took my place upon the minstrel's throne, and bent my ear to the discourse, with the same greedy solicitude for the extraordinary that Helen's old

legends used to induce. The haze which enveloped my faculties little by little cleared off. One channel of thought grew pellucid—then another—I began to be conscious of self, and of my connexion with passing events. Still I patiently waited, with some vague fancy of being eventually appealed to, as umpire, by our controversialists; but Sanford's repetition of his purpose drew me forward. Their backs were towards me, and their attention was so fixed on the point contested, that my steps were unheard. Sanford turned abruptly; his greeting was given with an unembarrassed air, and he extended a hand which I did not accept.

My explanation, comprised in a few sentences, was addressed to Fielding, who looked much more confounded than his companion.—“And now, Sir,” I continued, turning to Sanford, “you spoke of a declaration to my aunt—I will accompany you—come.”

The young nobleman, taking me familiarly by the arm, led the way, calling on Fielding to follow.

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CHAPTER IX.

Now understand
To Westmoreland
Which is my heritage,
I will you bring
And with a ring
By way of marriage
I will you take
And Lady make
As shortly as I can,
So have you won
An Earl's son
And not a vanquished man.

WE traversed the causeway in silence. The aspect of the day had changed ; chill lowering mist obscured our path ; the waves fell harshly on the shore. As I drew near the cottage localities my heart swelled. The wintry hue they wore was nothing ; I had often beheld them under such an aspect with tremors of joy. Now alas ! glimpses of more forlorn changes came to me, in deadening succession.

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The paddock was waste ; the pear-tree leafless, and half shorn of its branches, appeared to bend itself sorrowfully over it ; the paling, up-torn, lay here and there in frost-covered splinters : they spoke to me in impressive and intelligible language—" We are broken up and sentenced to be burned !"—Not a gabbler floated on the duck pond—my ear expanded to catch the cluck of our conceited hen, the note of Helen's guinea-fowl—"Twas silence all ! the subjects of our little farm had rendered up existence, or passed into another territory.

We entered the cottage and traversed, unmet, the ground apartments—not a whisper—Heaven thou hast kindly guarded us from continuity of any feeling ! The numb despondency which fell upon me as I surveyed our library, I thought could never, never, pass away. The process of removal seemed just begun—some shelves were empty, some had lost but half their row of comforts, some held a melancholy straggler only. Old associates, suspenders of my happy cares, were cast upon the floor, lone, or in piles disorderly. Our " wee bit ingie," that used to " blink so bonnily,"

was fireless, rust-eaten, and plundered of its fender. My aunt's round table groaned under store-room wares, promiscuously huddled. The index of our ponderous time-piece had not moved perhaps from the point at which I last beheld it, for the click had ceased. The casement was dim and cobwebbed : a shutter flapping heavily. Who had taken the cushion from my uncle's chair ?

I hemmed away a groan as I returned to the hall. Breesthough, his tail tucked close between his legs, sneaked from the kitchen. I caught myself inclining to embrace the sooty varlet ; he dared not bark a welcome, but he looked one, and retreated swiftly at Katy's tender obtestation—"Come back you ugly villain or I'll choke you !"

I went up stairs brooding upon sad remembrances, unceremoniously bidding my companion to follow. I crossed the landing to the little chamber I used to call my own—a glance informed me it was appropriated to stowage. My aunt sat *idle* in the midst of sundry trunks and boxes, whose cordings were illustrative of Grace McQuillan's dexterous fingers. Grace herself

was kneeling before, and cramming small packages into, a trunk, already so well filled that common handicraft could not have interpolated therein a fairy's knee-buckle.

"My poor child!" exclaimed my aunt, "my poor poor Walter!" She threw her arms around my neck and looked at me earnestly, but she did not shed a tear, and I, aware that Sanford was behind me, gulped down the drops her careworn aspect drew into my eyes.—"I put off seeing you, Walter," she went on, "because I could not learn to smile, and—and—but Mr. Fielding has told you all; your uncle, Walter, your uncle is in prison. It was not *his* fault, Walter."

"We shall talk over these matters bye and bye," said I: "here is a gentleman—"

"Ah! Mr. Sanford," cried my aunt, "I hoped that you were gone. Helen is preparing my unhappy child for our reverses. If she sees *you*—'Tis hard to turn the sickly out of doors, but indeed you must go instantly. Marion is—Walter you know your sister is—" She had risen and sat down again, during this address, mechanically as it would seem taking from the

floor a pair of my uncle's stockings which she rolled and unrolled with a palsied hand.

Sanford was about to speak, but I prevented him—"Let *me* explain Sir. This person has amused himself with our credulity dear aunt; he is of high rank—Lord Sanford—Why he condescended to falsehood we need not now discuss—He comes to make a signal reparation—to ask you for my sister Marion."

My aunt arose—held back her breath—the slight movement of her head which grief had given since I saw her, ceased. She looked steadfastly at Sanford—"Is this truth Sir, or have you been cheating that poor boy too?"

I thought the young man's forehead was a little crimsoned. He bowed, perhaps to hide his consciousness of the rebuke, and said with his usual easy confidence—"The announcement of my rank was perfectly correct Madam. I address you with increased deference in my real character. My friend Walter observes, very justly, that my motives for disguise need not be canvassed now. The present crisis will, I hope, apologize for the abruptness of this declaration.—Pray sanction my addresses to

your niece. I have no parents to control me. In evidence of my sincerity, I will request Marion to refer to your appointment the period of our union—to-morrow if you will. This is no place for ceremonial, and I know you will accord with me in waiving every thing that may procrastinate—When Lady Sanford is presented—”

“When Lady Sanford is presented,” exclaimed my aunt;—“Lady Sanford!”—She looked at the young man vacantly, as if he had proposed some monstrous speculation.

The self-contented smile of one who thinks he has established the justness of his own averment puckered Sanford’s mouth. He resumed—“I mean to travel with Lady Sanford for a year or two before I present her at Court or to my family: therefore a quiet ceremony will suit my views. Marion’s friends must perceive the fitness of permitting a short interval to elapse between our marriage and its announcement—My wife will become accustomed to her rank and—”

“Marion—your wife!” interrupted my aunt.

“Things fall on us so heavily that it is no wonder we are stricken dumb—But, God be thanked! He gave a power which has brought us through as great a shock as this!—Go—mate yourself elsewhere young man—there is no wife for you beneath this roof—Go Sir—When I thought you friendless I entreated you to go—now Sir I command you.”

Although anticipating this decision, yet my aunt's energy surprised me. Misfortune had stamped her features with a loftier character; her national saws and apothegms had given way to the concise and forcible delivery of one who bravely enters upon life's stern realities; her figure was drawn up even to the erect bearing of Madame Wallenberg, and the slight palsy which afflicted her, made her yet more venerable, while she calmly repulsed the astonished nobleman at the very outset of his remonstrance.

“I have no need to think upon this matter Sir—sometimes the right and wrong are twisted puzzlingly, and our wishes guide us false; but *here* the line is strait; my wish and Heaven's will agree. Now—to-morrow—in one year or

in ten, my answer is the same.—I have no need to think upon this matter Sir.”

Her firmness seemed exhausted ; she sat down and trembled violently. Sanford still maintained his ground, though looking crest-fallen and confounded. I turned angrily towards him, but Grace came forward now, and with a quiet authoritative wave made me fall back—“And when you go, young Lord, be sure you do not dare to come again.—Remember what the Madam told you—there is no wife for you beneath this roof—a Lord!—better you were an honest man!—It is remarkable I never trusted your sweet looks—there’s many a wasp’s sting in a honey comb.”

“Granny,” said Sanford, holding out his hand: “I am a debtor to your hospitable board ; will you be my agent here ?” He glanced towards my aunt. I reddened and again came forward.

“Put up your purse young Lord,” said Grace, composedly—“Would you offer the Geraldine an alms ?—May be your forefathers were beggars when his were princes!—The tree of your descent, mayhap, was not much higher than my own when his gave nestling to

the eagle. The parent of that poor, pale child, by rights was prouder than new-fangled Lords, for he was ten times ancienter—Hold up your head, Walter asthore; don't look affronted; your father's son is as good as any *upstart sassanach* I guess."

Sanford seemed to ponder on some entangled half-effaced remembrance.

"Daylight is dawdling up the slope," said Grace; "You needn't stand there simmering mischief any longer; Driscoll's boat is ready for the great bay head, 'tis only waiting for my yarn and bundles—Come Sir; we'll stow you all together—your trunk is packed; one of our small *girshas* will run away with it; she'll be before you at the boat—Bid the Madam a good morrow Sir; if we never see your face again we owe you no ill will at all."

"Marion, I presume, should have a voice in this matter," said Sanford, addressing me; "let me see her for a moment."

"Not for a midge's moment!" returned Grace: "there's no use talking." Granny nodded at her contumacious opponent. The gesture was provokingly significant of cool repul-

sion—Sanford shook his head impatiently: his polished ease forsook him.

“I *will* see Marion!—I *will* see her!” he repeated, angrily.

“You shall not,” said I, advancing.

Grace, swift as the flash, stood between us in the sybil attitude she assumed in giving judgment—“See her! you had better see your winding-sheet!—approach her! you had better lay yourself between the four dark, narrow boards with the worm for your bride!—Marry her! the tree of your descent shall shrivel; its fruit shall be the blighted acorn!”

“A Cassandra, a Cassandra!” shouted Sanford, assuming the mook heroic. “Such presages engender black bile and crudities. I fly incontinently, this inauspicious shore.”—He bowed respectfully to my aunt, caught up my unwilling hand and pressed it gaily, then turning to our witch besought her blessing on his graceless head, threatening, if refused, to haunt the glen like the fumid essence of that Ballygobbin butcher who was gibbeted on Hungry hill in patriarchal days.—“Your blessing Grace—I’ll not go under ban.”

"God's blessing on the back of you!" cried Grace—"May your foot find little rest until it treads the Saxons' land!"

"Thanks, Dame; if we can't have all we wish for here, we must teach ourselves to wish elsewhere—Walter you'll tell my lovely friends, at least, it is not *my* fault that I leave them *sans adieu*.—And now for Palestine.—Farewell!"

There was a dead pause when the young nobleman had departed.—I'd trust to a bean stalk for support as soon as I'd trust to him for truth!" said Grace at length—"We'll watch him please the fairies."

We heard her give a cautious tap at Helen's door. A few whispered sentences were exchanged, and Granny's active feet and hazel wand were swiftly pattering down the stairs. My aunt and I then fell into a melancholy discussion of events. I gathered from her little more than I already knew—My uncle's entanglement was beyond all possible extrication; his creditor had refused the only compromise that could be offered for restitution of the bond, and the sum was of such magnitude that the labour

of our lives could not work it out—"So we must make up our minds to a prison Walter"—said my aunt, "I mean your uncle and myself—He has been long enough deserted—It is a trial to think of him without a living soul to cheer him!" She went on hurriedly, as if afraid to trust herself with recollection—"Grace has promised to sell our little property; we offered it to that hardened man, but it was such a mite towards the debt that I suppose he wouldn't have it. Mr. Fielding says there will be enough to support us for awhile. He has hired a lodging for us in Cork, near the prison.—Think of his going to see your uncle Walter! Grace and he have managed every thing; I can do nothing now—nothing!—If there are cruel hearts my child, be sure that there are kind ones too."

"I shall work; I am resolved to work," said I.

My aunt surveyed me sorrowfully—"You work, my poor child!—you have neither skill nor strength!"

"I shall grow vigorous now," said I—"Love

for my uncle will give me energy. I have a plan already—Quinilla mentioned once that Mr. Bullock wanted an assistant in the shop—I'll offer him my services."

"You!" said my aunt, recoiling,—“you a shop-boy!”

“’Tis less degradation to be a poor shop-boy, than to be poor and idle, living on your little fund.”

“But Quinilla is at Mr. Bullock’s,” said my aunt.

I winced a little—only a little—for when real misfortune comes, vexations are vexations merely—My reply was resolute—“I’ll do any thing but leave you—Mr. Bullock lives in Cork: my uncle’s prison is in Cork.”

“The sullen looking jail!” ejaculated my aunt thoughtfully;—“it stands at one end of the main street; I remember it well, and its fellow prison at the other end. The poor debtor has but a blank look out between the iron bars!—But there is a sadder place than either, that I remember better—Oh! the heavy hours that I have passed there!—Heaven shield me from such another touch of heart-break!”

"A sadder home than even a dungeon!" I exclaimed.

"Sadder than even the home of the churchyard!" replied my aunt—"Ever since my darling lost her mind that mad-house is before me."

I shuddered; my highest effort at self control, could hardly silence the expression of my horror—My aunt continued rather to apostrophize than to address me.

"It is before me day and night, that solitary house!—The grated windows; the narrow gloomy passages, so deathlike silent—not silent long—How awful was the opening of a door;—low cries and jibberings; songs that made you hate the name of song; you longed to stop your ears, but they were sharpened by the beating of your heart!—and then—to look into the cells!—wild starting eyes—human eyes, like a ferocious beast's! mouths venting demon imprecations!—your blood would curdle, yet you were forced to listen and to look, as if a spell were over you—I saw one creature pinioned and then lashed: I fell upon my knees to beg they would have pity on her—they laughed and

told me it was good for her ! that stripes would bring her to her senses ! Heaven ! gracious pitying Heaven ! send some gentler guardian to the maniac's cell !”

I tried to stop such terrible details ; my tongue was glued.

“Walter,” said my aunt solemnly, “there are bitterer trials than imprisonment and poverty !—You are weak in body ; be not weak in mind ; be firm when you are called upon. Your uncle, they tell me, is bowed and broken—grief swallows up our years my child—We must leave you and your sisters to the fatherhood of God.—Promise me Walter, promise me that Marion shall not be forced into such a human den as I now spoke of.—Work—toil—beg—but keep her from the—”

“Do not name it,” I exclaimed, shrinking back ; “you will drive me—Marion will recover ; Fielding said so ;—Fielding has studied the disease ; he knows—”

“He does *not* know !” said my aunt. She checked herself—“And will you disappoint me, my child ?”

“Marion shall not become the inmate of a

madhouse, while I have power to prevent it," said I.

My aunt heaved a long sigh—"Thank you Walter; the weight is off which crushed me more than terror of a prison. This injunction was always knocking at my heart; I have room for hope now—She may recover—nothing is impossible our good friend says, if we but use the means. Before this last relapse we thought her well, and were preparing for our journey. I was gathering up courage to go to you, my child, but not for the purpose of forewarning you. It was the offer of that gay young hypocrite that brought back the memory of errors committed with the best intentions. I was filled with fears of like weaknesses and like repentances. We should not dare to think the laws of God should be set aside for our sakes.—A wife—Marion a wife!—Sanford—Lord Sanford did you say?—How strangely things of long ago are brought before us sometimes."

She mused awhile, but seeing me attentive thus proceeded.

"Your uncle had once a friend, in character

not much unlike that young dissembler, gay and trifling. He married abroad, a fair, timid, creature, and brought her to Ireland. . She was the pride of Dublin Castle ; no one to compare to her for beauty, unless it might be a proud-looking cousin who came with her. The flurry of a court ripened the seeds of a disease that had remained dormant until then. The husband doted on her until the blight fell. She was stricken like *my* darling, and then the giddy man, thinking it a stain to be united to a crazy wife, made love to her cousin and sued for a divorce. His family had great interest at that time, so the divorce was patched up, and he married again. The poor maniac was confined in one of those scowling mansions I described to you—a better sort indeed, but bad enough—harsh keepers, no cordial-minded skilful help, like our good angel. Your uncle, who had been abroad, returned, and found her out. Chance had led me also to her Asylum—It was the first time he and I had met.—We nursed her, both of us—the heart must have been stone that would not bleed for her ! She sometimes took Fitzgerald for her husband,

and me for her deceitful cousin.—How she would reproach us!—We soothed her with kind words—she became gentle and uncomplaining, and died soon after, a prayer on her lips.—The ear of God is open to the lunatic!¹²—My aunt covered her face and sobbed; the tears her own griefs could not draw forth, fell for her unfortunate friend, in whom I recognized my mother.

“And did the cousin never visit her,” said I.

“Never.—The cousin’s brother came from Germany when news arrived there of these unhappy accidents. He called your—your uncle’s friend out, for daring to offer to his sister while the first wife was alive.—He was killed, but that didn’t prevent the wedding. The parents never forgave their callous-hearted daughter; her downfall, however, was approaching; Ireland became distracted with rebellion; nothing heard of but exile, hanging and attainder. The husband was foremost of the disaffected band; he was proclaimed and apprehended. The lady wife considered his

sentence a disgrace and—That's dame McQuil-
lan's step, isn't it Walter ?”

I would not wound my aunt by betraying that I saw through the flimsy veil which her kindness flung over our hapless destiny. She seemed quite to have forgotten the inklings she had given us of Julia Derentsi and Margaret Wallenberg. My father beyond doubt was the rebel subject of this tale which, in its leading points, agreed with all we had early heard of his patriotic venture and untimely fate. It was my mother's fate, however, that entered like a knife into my bosom. I groped for some excuse to account for the tears which came thronging to my eyes. The little narrative had recalled the family of Wallenberg, and I hastily enquired for the Baroness.—Had she been made acquainted with our reverses ?

My aunt replied in the negative. She had thought of writing to her, but my uncle had opposed it. The Baron, she said, from some long-standing grudge hated the very name of a Fitzgerald. There was a pause at these words, and a look of disquietude cast at me. The speaker was too open to varnish a tale

smoothly, but I was purposely inattentive to the blunder, and she continued with something of her old quaintness—"No, Walter, we must not encrease the disputes between the Baroness and her unappeasable husband.—Misfortune softens some minds and sours others.—The early death of a favorite son gnaws at the man's heart—as to the rest, my child, the truly rich are those who can conform to circumstances, who, if they can't get grapes, can relish gooseberries.—That's Grace's tread at last—it sounds encouraging."

"He's off, bag and baggage," exclaimed Grace—"so sprightly too! as if he only left Miss Quinny. He'll forget us in a fortnight, an irrecoverable sinner!—Well, we musn't feed on smoke; that won't help us to carry mill-stones. Mr. Fielding is coming here to dinner. I told him trouble-the-house was turned off. He looked astounded at the news. Katy and Breesthough are at logger-heads; so I'll kindle a fire, tidy up the parlour, and lay the cloth. We must look lively, and welcome the young Geraldine"

CHAPTER X.

Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,
Land of the mountain and the flood,
Land of my sires! what mortal hand
Can e'er untie the filial band
That knits me to thy rugged strand!

Scott.

OUR evening passed heavily—how painfully deepened are dreary feelings by seeing a favorite spot dismantled!—My local attachments were intense; they had been moulded to my humble home—old furniture, like old family faces, encrusted my affections. I could not persuade myself that such feelings could be transferred to other homes. I surveyed the walls, the windows, the shelves which had

treasured my aunt's plate. Despoiled and changed in aspect as our dwelling was, I thought no structure could replace it in my love. The dull sound of the hammer, used to fasten down a box-lid, or to detach some ambulatory fixture; the rustling of our busy helps, foremost of whom, apostrophizing every article she touched, was Kitty Driscoll; the silence and inaction of those too heart-sick to mingle with the diligent; all fell on me so strangely that I internally assented to Kitty's protestation. "For a certainty we're swopped, every mother's son of us, and some one else is in our places!"

Marion's paroxysm had been succeeded by a sullen calm. Fielding considered it expedient to interrupt this brooding heaviness, and to prepare her for the approaching emigration by having our change of circumstances guardedly unfolded. Helen had been occupied with the disclosure: Marion's grief was passionate, but it was entirely directed to her uncle's desolate state. In a prison, a dark prison!—nobody to comfort him? Well, we were all, indeed, grown cruel!—What kept us from him?—*She*

was ready to go; quite ready. Helen's promise that we should set off in a day or two could not appease her. She walked up and down their little chamber, heaping question upon question. What kind of a place was this prison?—was it like those horrid dungeon-keeps in the old chronicles?—It was the hardest thing to punish people in such an inhuman way for nothing!—It was not her uncle's debt, and if it were, what good could be effected by shutting a poor man up until he paid a debt, who had been robbed of every thing he had to pay it with?—It was the oddest law!—she could not understand it.

Fielding brightened when Helen, with a trembling voice, repeated Marion's stormy ejaculations. "Her train of false conceptions is dispersing," he observed. "Reflection is at work; she reasons justly; compassion for her uncle will supersede compassion for her lover."

She entered shortly after, repeating her questions. She seemed dissatisfied with our explanations, regarded Fielding suspiciously, and watched every opening of the door. Yet she made no enquiry for Sanford, but would bewail

her uncle in her sweet broken accents, and then would seem lost in meditation. I was so engrossed by her while she remained, that I had no thought for the day's singular discoveries, but after she retired they came vividly before me.

My ideas of nobility of birth were chiefly borrowed from my ancients. It was a distinction which circumstances could not obliterate, an inalienable possession ; therefore I, in my fallen state, was as responsible for that dignity of sentiment which ought to uphold it, and as much justified in all reasonable appreciation of its value as Lord Sanford. I had but vague conceptions of heraldic grades, or conventional titles ; a patrician was a patrician, in my code of aristocracy, whether Duke or simple gentleman, each equal in inherent nobility of blood ; and to such prerogative, and to the respect attached to it, Sir William Fielding's son was, according to my appraisement, as much entitled as his quondam friend. I confided in Fielding too implicitly, however, to forestal by a single hint a revelation which the dictates of the noblest sentiments, only, had deferred.

As he was unacquainted with the latent motives which dictated my aunt's refusal of Lord Sanford, he looked surprised on learning her decision. He had not perhaps expected this utter disregard of wordly advantage: he regarded his plain-spoken hostess with increased approbation, and seemed eager to defer to her judgment. The more I considered him the more satisfied I became that Sanford's insinuations were groundless. Fieklings was much more observant of my aunt and Marion than of Helen: for the former he manifested the solicitude of a son; for Marion a never-relaxing watchfulness. Helen, comparatively, was disregarded: when he took leave his salutation to her was reserved, contrasted with his friendly adieu to my aunt. It was some abatement of anxiety to feel secure that this second entanglement was merely ideal, and I threw myself on my bed, determined to view all things favorably, and not to exhaust in painful surmise the strength of mind it was now so essential to husband.

Dawn was quivering through the mountain hollows when I descended to the parlour. Katy

and Kitty Driscoll were putting things to rights, and *colloquing* over the fore-day's incidents. In virtue of that marvellous expansion of ear which servants possess, they seemed perfectly acquainted with the circumstances of Sanford's dismissal. I could decypher Dame Driscoll's version of the affair by a comment which I accidentally caught—"You may talk yourself dumb, Mrs. Mulligan, but I say again an' again it is a crying sin that a real, real Lord should be sent off that way like a travelling-tinker. Bill is quite ashamed o' such behaviour." There was a wrathful flush on Kitty's face; she passed me unceremoniously, brandishing the screw-driver: but, conscience-stricken at her rudeness, she returned and with a lower dip than ordinary said, she was come to wait upon Miss Marion, and take her to the sheeling.

It was a fine frosty morning; the air keen and the sunshine exhilarating. I had slept soundly, and felt better than I had hoped to feel, wonderfully invigorated by the conviction that Sanford was gone. Taking a base advantage of Katy, who, apart from her peculiar territory, was packing, and muttering, and

wondering "if poor unlucky Cork was where it used to be," I gave a low whistle, which drew Breesthough from his kennel, and we set out together for the ruin. The animal shot off before me, never venturing to shew his tail until we turned the point.

My friend was writing in the oak chamber. We resumed the conversation of the preceding evening. I communicated my plan for earning at least my own livelihood, and perhaps contributing to the subsistence of my family. Fielding looked at me with undisguised amazement, combating strenuously, what he called this unnecessary degradation, and suggesting various nobler occupations, all of which however tended to remove me from those whom I held myself indissolubly bound to. His arguments would have been convincing to any one not weighed down as I was by the secret foreboding of a calamity more dire than want. It was in vain he represented that higher pursuits, in which I should have a *friend* to second me, would be productive of higher benefits to those I loved; my resolution was unchangeable; I insisted that no honest occupation

could degrade the mind ; my secret trembled on my lips when I thought he viewed me with displeasure ; but false shame kept me mute. It was a strange anomaly of my nature that I cared not to what humble craft my physical powers were applied, provided my mental faculties escaped humiliation.

We returned together to the cottage. It was not the absence of the usual cheerful appurtenances of our breakfast-board that took away my appetite, nor yet the strict frugality of our meal ; it was the emaciated form of my aunt. The comforts she had been accustomed to, were prohibited now, with the severest self-denial. It would break her heart she said, to partake of better food than poor Fitzgerald had doled out to him ; *she* could enjoy the blessed air, the thousand blessings of the free, which she had never valued properly until her husband was deprived of them—people should lose these bounties for awhile, to learn their just price.

Helen entered at the moment, looking pale and harassed—our question was simultaneous—was Marion worse ?

She had been talking all night of her uncle Helen said, accusing every one of ingratitude. —“ She that used to love me so well,” added Helen, “ she looks upon me now with coldness and distrust—I could bear any thing but that.”

When tears are unfrequent, we attach an importance to their cause and feel an emotion for the complainer which the weak-minded, who find a ready outlet for their grief in weeping, cannot call forth—Helen’s grief was too deep-seated to find relief in common-place lament. Therefore to behold *her* eyes dimmed, and the hand tremble which was extended for the cup my aunt had promptly filled, gave me an indescribable pang : she emptied the cup eagerly, as if to escape notice.

“ Marion is gone with Kitty Driscoll to the sheeling,” resumed Helen, brightening up on observing that my annt was viewing her with brimful eyes.—“ Grace holds a court this morning—some misdemeanour of our glen-boys—the leader of the riot is to be reprimanded publicly, and to be blotted from the roll of our assistants in removal. We thought the trial

might amuse Marion—What delight it gave her once, to sit in judgment with her Granny !”

Helen’s voice trembled ; her fine countenance was shadowed heavily ; she surveyed the desolate apartment with a look that said—“ we are almost at hope’s boundary.” But Helen never used high-spun phrases to point and sharpen painful circumstances ; she felt that misfortune firmly met, is half defeated ; a sudden smile conquered her momentary gloom, and while breakfast lasted she discoursed even pleasantly of our migration, as of an event which lost its harshness in the prospect of reunion with our uncle. Grace, she added, was so considerate as to leave her nothing to do that morning but to bid her little flock farewell, and to dismiss and satisfy our turbulent retainers, many of whom insisted on their right, as Clansboys, of marshalling us to the *Kingdom o’ Cork*. Katy had positively refused to be discarded ; she was too used to her own way to give it up in a finger-snap ; she had ’sponsible relations in the city ; she was allied to the great Keatings of Blarney-lane, and could live with them, and serve the master all the same : to lose her

labour would utterly destroy her health and ruin her understanding.

My aunt's eyes glistened, no longer sadly, as her darling gaily quoted Mrs. Mulligan.

Fielding, with an air half bantering, half serious, now introduced the vocation I had chosen. My aunt cast at me a wistful glance. Helen blushed deeply, I thought proudly, and by her looks assented to Fielding's expostulatory arguments. Our friend, calling me *an obstinate*, appealed more directly to aunt Fitzgerald, as he sometimes termed his hostess—Her reply was given in her own sober style.

"The poor can't choose professions Sir—Walter may be as good a man behind a counter as behind a velvet cushion. The noblest of callings was entrusted to the humblest traders; neither King nor Tetrarch was chosen for that office."

Impressed by the seriousness of her allusion, we looked at each other—There was no reply. At length I broke the pause by enquiring the relative positions of my future residence and my uncle's prison—My aunt reflected for a moment—"Quinilla's friend lives in the main-

street, not many yards from the South jail ; an honest kindly woman, but rather given to ape the habits of the higher classes. I see things clearer now than when my eyes were younger," she added in a lighter tone—"trials make rare spectacles."

Fielding left us to arrange the method of our journey : we were to begin it the next morning. I fell into a reverie which had our port of destination for its object. My preconceived ideas of civic grandeur were lowered by the strange nomenclature of streets and places.—Whenever fancy sketched a city, Athens was its type—Athens in the time of its supremacy—its topography was as well laid down in my mental diagram as were the features of the mountains which surrounded me—ports—gymnasia—temples—streets deriving their appellatives from Gods and heroes—My ear was wounded by the vulgar epithets of Cork localities—Black-pool—Blarney-lane, Hammond's marsh—and, worst of all, the main, (hibernicé the *mean*,) street—What grating sounds compared to attic sounds !—By favor of that faculty which makes our passage from sphere to sphere the transit

of a minute, I landed at the Piræus and was hurrying full speed to the groves of Academus—when Katy brought me back by clattering the tea-cups. Thus was I prevented discussing the advantages of euphony beneath the domes of Athens, unceremoniously translated to the wilds of Munster, and condemned to a dissertation on the beauty of alacrity, delivered by Mrs. Mulligan.—“ ’Tis a murther to murther time,” growled Katy; “there’s a regiment of empty jars an’ empty bottles to pack up—the coal-scuttle, two tinder boxes, (one as good as new,) the salting tub, (we won’t leave that behind,) an’ Breesthough’s kennel (the creature would be perished these pinching nights without it).—Stir yourself Sir, an’ don’t be drammin’ o’ Jerusalem !”

“Where’s my aunt? Katy.”

“Gone to bid the neighbours a good bye. I wish we could turn *somebody* into something handy. Help us with your own things any how. There’s a lot o’ linen to be *gathered* in the tumble-down yonder.”

The mention of the ruin brought my diary, my portable desk, and all my other valuables

to mind. I promised the alacrity Katy had admonished, and set off to rescue my memorials. My rookery looked sorrowful—my dear old haunt!—the ivy still would cluster round its walls, but I should never climb it! To keep off heart-ache I began to whistle, emptying the window-seat with a shaking hand. The papers were quickly lodged in their conveyance. I took up the gift of Madame Wallenberg; it recalled her last injunction; but I was more than ever bent on adhering to my humble course, and in no case would I force myself upon the bounty of a man who “hated our very name.” Indignant ruminations on this part of my aunt’s story were interrupted by a chaunt beneath the window.

I’ve not a poor penny I *can* call my own ;
I’m naked, so wasted I’m shewing the bone ;
My eyes are two wells o’ salt water, aroon !
Bad luck to our good luck ! ‘tis gone to the moon. .

Not a joke are we left, not a tatter o’ fun ;
Our honor is strangled, our courage is done ;
The heart hot for fighting is chuck-full o’ frights ;
Bad dreaming keeps off all our sleeping o’ nights.

"Slauveen!" I cried, shooting my head through the window-shafts.

"That's I, but who are you, an' where are you my little Leprechan?—have you a purse o' goold for a poor boy?"

He raised his eye obliquely and espied me. I pointed to the ivy ladder, and, with the spring of a cat, he mounted to the chamber.

"Was it to use yourself to four bare walls with slits sky-high that you shut yourself up here then, Master Walter?"

"How is my uncle?" I exclaimed.

"Sore and shaken, sore and shaken," he replied, heaving a sigh.

"Why did you leave him?—We go to-morrow."

"An' how do you think the Madam would climb knock-na-Dhioul without Lanty Maw?—That Lanty is a diamond Sir! he earns *his* bread and *my* bread without a thank to nobody. Mrs. Bullock dotes on him; he carries her like Buonaparte to eat gooseberries at Sunday's well o' holydays. 'Tis Miss Quinny only makes him kick—I'd not swop him for the fine Turk horse at Astley's circus!"

"Circus !" I repeated—"have they games in Cork ?"

"Plenty, plenty," said Slauveen—"whisk, brag, pick-up, nosey, beggar-my-neighbour, thumb-the-pip, commerce, and *casseeeny*."

I was confounded ; these modern games did not appear akin to the Olympic.

"Katy will kill me !" cried Slauveen,— "I'm come home half an hour, and she puts her claw on me already to turn forty jobs—'pack up the dripping-pan, don't forget the basting-ladle, look for the crooked kitchen spoon, 'tis always going astray ; where's the snout o' the old bellows and the handle o' the pope's head ?' She'd fill her pockets with the cinders sooner than lave um after her !"

"And why did you desert her ?" I enquired.

"She bid me whip into the boat an' fly like a spark to Bill Driscol's.—She wants him to coax the Ballygobbin carrier to take the dog-kennel to Cork.—She has a head, that Katy Mulligan, and so has Shannon steeple:—just think o' the crazy dog-kennel dragging up the crookedest hill in Ireland's four quarters ! I came away, just to get rid of her. Bill was out,

and so I thought I'd bid good bye to this old place.—What a merry day we had here *wanst* !”

“Will you leave your mother then, Slauveen?”

“’Tis better to leave one friend Sir, than half a dozen. She wishes me to go. I’ll see her often. The poor master is so used to me; he wants but little help indeed, so I hired myself to Mrs. Bullock, to clane boots and knives in spare hours. Mr. Bullock is come in for a fortune; an uncle’s brother’s cousin’s son is dead. We’d get on charming if they’d only swop my master for Miss Quinny—she’d be no loss to no one, and she’d look as well in jail as any where. Shall I help to buckle up that knapsack Master Walter; We’ll fling it into Katy’s hamper.”

I took it from him and slung it round my neck.

“Now,” exclaimed Slauveen, “you’re the very moral o’ Dinny Botherhead the poor scholar from Bally-Licky. Who in the name o’ the north wind is that scudding up the stairs?”

Fleet as the wind, indeed, were the footsteps

that approached : the outer chamber was traversed rapidly, Johnny's throne surmounted with a spring, the curtain torn down, and Grace McQuillan, her ruddy cheek blanched to ashy whiteness, entered. The look she cast around pierced every nook of the apartment—"Not here, not here!" she ejaculated, striking her hands together with such a burst of wo that I was utterly incapable of questioning her.

"Mother," exclaimed Slauveen, "don't you know me mother?"

"Have you seen her?" exclaimed Grace, clutching my hand; "tell me you have seen her, and if I'm stricken blind I'll not complain!"

"Who mother?—Miss Helen—Miss Marion?"

"Marion, boy, Marion—They said she was with me—with me!—she's lost! she's lost!"

I passed her with a bound; I felt no lameness. I had the muscle of the tiger. I flew towards the mole, jumped into the boat that brought Slauveen, and with two strokes of an oar was pushed upon the bank beneath Driscoll's cabin. I tore through fern and underwood; the cabin door was fastened. I shook it vio-

lently. A girl who was driving goats stopped to stare at me. "Sure Bill was off a little after sparrow-call to Reen; he won't be back to-night may be."

"Where is his wife?"

"Gone with him sure: he took her in just at the point beyont. I was peeping at um through the fairies' eye and wishing I was wid um."

"Was any other person in the boat?"

"Two more; the lad that turned out to be a lord; he slept at Bill's last night. There was Grace, our witch, besides;—gone to the great bay-head to sell her bundles."

"How do you know they were going to Reen?"

"Sure Bill was going there yesterday, but he put back: the wind was blustherous he said."

It was enough; Marion *was* lost.

CHAPTER XI.

Farewell ye bowers
Where childhood played
Its sunny hours
In brook-laved glade !
Ye friends (from youth,
Whate'er befell)
I own *your* truth,
Farewell, farewell !

Frithiof.

I returned to the ruin—it was deserted—I ran towards the cottage. As I was crossing the causeway I descried a boat shooting swiftly through the passage to the outer bay. Fielding was at the helm. I made a frantic signal that I would go with him ; he waved one hand in the direction of the cottage, and with the

other pointed across the bay. I understood him; he was in pursuit of Marion; I was to console my aunt and Helen.

Just at the junction of the causeway and mainland a rider crossed my path, urging his horse vigorously along the bridle-road which wound round the lesser to the larger bay.—It was Slauveen—I stopped him and hastily imparted the information I had received respecting the route the fugitives had taken. He shook his head.—“All fudge, Sir!—Bill’s too ’cute for that : the thief that gives leg-bail will tell the cross he makes for, and run contrary-ways. My mother has found out that they have four hours start of us, and wind and tide into the bargain.”—He galloped off.

I hastened to our wretched home. Katy was standing at the threshold, straining her eyes in all directions. Miss Marion was no more gone than she was—What!—Miss Marion run away!—a burning shame to them that thought it!

I enquired for Helen and my aunt. Katy pointed to the study; they were sitting amidst the lumber, pale and still. They noticed me

only by a glance, and dropped their eye-lids like automata. I threw myself upon a chair; I would have given worlds to see them weep, to hear a burst of grief or indignation. The moveless faces were appalling; a cold stupor fastened on me.

I know not how many hours we passed in utter silence; Helen once ejaculated—"Did she mean to leave us?—without a tear!—no token of farewell—Marion!"

The day grew sullen; the wind swept through the ravine with a low portentous wail.—Was that the hearth round which we used to draw with joyous alertness?—A dreary whistle was all that it gave forth. My aunt shivered and raised her heavy eyes to the clock, which Katy had wound up that morning—it struck—mechanically I began to count—some of its ponderous embowelments gave way; the wheels and chains rattled, and the clock hammer, like a funeral bell, kept up a lengthened chime, tolling at short intervals its week's reckoning. A rustling drew my attention to the door, and there stood Mrs. Mulligan, aghast, and staring at the mysterious, ever-

sounding clock, her limbs so stiffened by sheer horror of the incessant peal, that the fire apparatus she had collected to shed a little comfort on the scene, fell from her expanded apron. Helen drew a stool to my aunt's feet and chafed her hands. The clock, having told its sonorous tale, was silent. Katy fluctuated a moment between superstitious and good-natured impulses, looked again at her haggard mistress, and advanced; yet ever and anon, as she blew a cheering glow from the fast kindling embers, she would cast over her shoulder a glance indicative of wonder, anger, and dismay, towards the awful time-piece. This accident saved the clock from being dragged up Knock-na-Dhioul with the dog-kennel.

We drew my aunt's chair to the fire and faltered words of hope.—We had such confidence in Fielding—they would be overtaken; they *must* be overtaken. She faintly shook her head, and shewed her dissent by exclaiming—"How shall I meet Fitzgerald without that child!"

Katy laid the cloth; we did not lift the

solitary cover; we could not even venture to exhort my aunt to eat—"Where is Grace?" I whispered.

"Gone with Mr. Fielding," replied Katy; "that witch of Ender will downface one that Kitty and Bill Driscoll have coaxed away their mistress for that young pretender. I'll wager any thing Miss Marion will be found somewhere about here, with the fairies."

It grew dark. We addressed my aunt with a hopeless entreaty that she would go to bed. Her answer was a prayer for her benighted child. We joined in her orison, and then decided on passing the remaining hours of night together. Helen pillowed the great chair for my aunt; I refreshed the fire. We sat anxiously observant of voice or footfall; and thus we passed that tedious dismal night, our heart's throb quickened by a gust of wind, or by the clicking of the death-watch.

Towards morning my aunt sank into a broken slumber: as the cold light of a winter dawn fell upon her face it looked wan and colorless: we dared not move for fear of waking her. The embers struggled faintly

through the day-light, which now made visible all the details of a scene so comfortless. Had years passed by since we assembled here, the spirit of joy so active in us that we could have scaled the house-top?—It was impossible that months, months only, could have changed the aspect of all things!—The pallid wrinkled sleeper scarcely had preserved a lineament of the active, florid housewife. Helen was altered fearfully; beheld through the misty dawn she had the shadowy loveliness of something visionary. My thin and jaundiced hand was evidence of my own decay. My uncle was in prison—and where was the gayest of us all?

The falling of a pebble arrested my attention. Helen's eyes were closed—I crept to the window and cautiously unbuttoned the sash—a letter was slid into my hand; the bearer was muffled in Fielding's cloak; it was Grace. The letter addressed to me, was dated the preceding day, signed "W. Fielding," and ran thus.

"I am still in pursuit of Lord and Lady Sarford; they were married an hour since; it is essential I should see them. If your aunt

persist in following without delay the plan I laid down for her journey, do not dissuade her. The conveyances to Cork are arranged—I write while horses are preparing—You will find Slauveen at Bantry with my carriage.—If possible I join you *en route*—if not in Cork.”

“Farewell,” was half scratched, and in further proof of the writer’s haste the letter was unsealed. It had fallen from my hand when I came to the announcement of Marion’s marriage. The sudden gloom which darkened all my faculties sufficiently revealed, by its contrast with my previous state of comparative tranquillity, that I had founded a hope on Fielding’s interference.—He had been one hour too late—“One hour only!” I exclaimed—Helen approached, took up the letter and read it. She folded her arms with an air of quiet resignation, resumed her seat beside the slumberer, and shaded off a sun-ray which struggled through the casement.

My aunt awoke ; she looked at us, and misinterpreting our silence, hastily arose—“Well, my children, we will go ; my husband must not be deserted longer ; Marion is taken from *our*

care, but not from the care of providence. That treacherous young man is the victim of his own deceit !”

Helen’s countenance became expressive of astonishment ; she seemed pondering on the ambiguous words ; they insinuated a retribution which *she* might not consider due to an act, rash and unauthorized, indeed, but still dictated by affection.

“Come Helen,” said my aunt ; “come Walter ; our tales of prison horrors have prepared us for a prison—my sweet Marion would have helped to brighten it : be cheerful for her sake children.”

I perceived she had no hope of recovering Marion, and therefore gave her Fielding’s letter. Her decision was quickly made : an hour afterwards we were treading our way towards the boat which was to convey us the first miles of our melancholy course. The children of the glen accompanied us to the water’s edge. A numb silence usurped the usual noisy acclamations. My aunt leaned on Grace, I supported Helen. Even Katy, with her led-captain, Breesthough, bringing up the rear, failed to

elicit a mark of admiration. The glen-boys walked two and two, as in funeral procession. Sobs burst from Helen; my aunt's fortitude gave way when she was strained to the faithful heart of Grace McQuillan. Rugged hands were eagerly thrust forward—one last shake—one last look into our faces!—Little fingers clenched our garments; the boat pushed off, and the wild, emphatic cry which floated after us, sounded like the death-keene.

Blind Johnny was not at the parting, but as the boat approached the ruined walls of my *Balchutha* the minstrel was discovered seated on a crag beside his little guide. At the signal of our approach he caught up his pipes: the first notes of his farewell were drawn out with tremulous fingers; he broke off, drooped his head, and passed his hand across his blighted eyes—The oars were silenced—"Bless ye, bless ye!" cried the beggar;—"bless ye, for ye have pitied the aged and the blind!"

"Bid the boy lead him to the cottage," sobbed my aunt; "Grace will weep with him for comfort."

All the play-haunts of my happy valley,

dingles, coves, heath-banks, headlands, seemed rushing to bid me a good bye, and then as swiftly to fly from me. As the last familiar ridge flitted past, I buried my face between my hands and felt as if the fibres of my heart were rent—what !—should I never again behold my pleasant places !—Surely we should “meet as heretofore some summer morning.”

The rocks retired more and more behind us : though only in a wider basin, I thought a world of waves surrounded me, and hastily I shut them out again.—Let no one blame me : in local attachments I had the sensitive weaknesses of a tender woman—I would have felt enamoured of novel objects if I could—Was it my fault if my heart ached ?—I tried to awaken curiosity, a spirit of adventure, but whenever I surveyed the unknown sea, a thought of the ‘burn’ we had ‘paddled in so merrily,’ would send coward tell-tales to my eyes.

I was so completely abstracted that I mistook the stir and buzz of the little town we landed near, for the turmoil of a city, and thought we were in Cork, though Slauveen, who received us at the head of a creek, insisted

that the Ballygobbiners, except to' fighting days, were just as tame as ducks without their heads. A resuscitated fossil creature, loosed from its ante-diluvian masonry, might have felt as I did; when I found myself borne along in the vehicle Fielding had assigned us, it seemed to me as if our orb were swinging loosely in the firmament.

Helen drew my observation to the scenery, which in many of its features resembled the harsher districts of our glen. The wild and savage looked trebly wild and savage beneath the leaden clouds which rolled like solid masses parted from the gravitating mountain—heath-banks clad in winter's russet, bluff walls of rock bristled with leafless thorn-trees, goats peeping from sterile heights, and some lone hut testifying at intervals of dwellers in the wilderness.—The more disconsolate grew the scene the more it increased in interest; jolts and jars, the dangers of the route, were unattended to; but when (emerging from a gorge) we commenced an ascent which made foot progression often necessary, I waded upwards

through an expanse of melted snow, with some consciousness of physical distress.

We resumed our carriage. From certain most emphatic jerks and plunges I inferred that we had reached the skull-capped road of Phil McGun, but Slauveen protested it was *ages off* behind us. At last we bowled on freely. I hoped at every turn of the road we should encounter Fielding, but posts were reached, and horses changed, and dusk came on apace, without an incident. My aunt made enquiries and found that by using diligence we might reach Cork that night: horses were in readiness at the summons of Slauveen; refreshments tendered. We proceeded with an expedition which, compared with our outseting, appeared magical. At last we caught sight of twinkling lamps—(Helen thought them will o' the wisps)—the horses clattered over pavement—we were driven through guttery streets, lined by houses of capricious fashion, from which projected Helen's will o' the wisps, shedding faint lustre. I blinked, in order to clarify a dusky building adorned with columns, but a

woman bawling "*Burn oysters*" through the carriage window, stopped my critical researches. We alighted at a door which opened to the thunder of a brass machine. A girl, the converse of a Sappho, viewed us with a tragic stare, clipped a thief from a candle, blew her fingers, and ushered us up stairs.

From an apartment on the landing, lighted by slender moulds, advanced two ladies, splendidly attired—Quinilla introducing Mrs. Bullock.

CHAPTER XII.

Corcach,* “ non e piu com era prima !”

CORK ! thou art no more what thou hast been !
—Thou hast thy city domes and thy suburban
palaces, commercial domiciles and classical
cassinos ; thou hast thy ample quays and solid
bridges, thy flesh and piscatorial shambles ;
thou hast thy glorious haven ;—nay thou hast
still thy pinguid civic rulers, thy learned
doctors, cunning artisans, and locust Lazzaroni.

* The Irish name Corcach, (pronounced Curkig) is said to signify a marshy place.

—But how is the spirit of thy people changed !
—Where are the dry-drums and supper-parties
Quinilla used to grace ?—whither are thy
veteran card-players translated ?—Gone !—not
an effigy is left, not one among the rising gen-
eration to resuscitate the glories of great and
little *cas*.—Gone are thy social rubbers, sub-
verters of scandal, smoothers of wrinkles and
asperities !—Thy green-cloth covers are pasture
for the moth ; thy cards are desecrated, trans-
ferred to juggling gipsies, cards which to
shuffle gracefully was reckoned an accomplish-
ment.—Where are thy ball-rooms and thy
phil-harmonics, Cork ?—Thy festive spirit is
‘ in the deep bosom of the ocean buried !’—
no one dares prattle of ‘ its whereabouts !’—To
dance is dissolute, to sing a profanation ; the
torch of Momus is extinguished, the melody
of the land is gone.

Are they too ostracized, those bristly natives
of the sty which, dead and living, used to grace
thy streets ; the dead with drooping snouts and
throats slit longitudinally, stretched out in gory
rows upon their narrow biers, (a touching spec-
tacle !) outside the slaughter-stores of great O

C—— ; the living porkers, (denizens as free as bodies corporate and not less constitutional) keeping the path with philosophic gait ; inflexible to the upsetting of less phlegmatic passengers.—Hast thou located in some dungeon sty thy tax and rent defrayers ungrateful city, hast thou ?—Where *are* the pigs ? an echo answers —“where ?”

And where are thy odoriferous lanes, O Cork ! carpetted with clammy mud, uniting with brief interval thy pleasant promenades, the Mall and Mardyke ?—where are those steaming purlieus, unconscious of the scavenger, tenacious of the dews of Heaven ?—One of them I well remember was entered by a narrower lane, through which two rats abreast could scarcely find a passage ; and *there* was planted, whilom, propped against the wall, an aged Belisarius ; at sound of footstep casting up his filmy orbs, importuning the passenger —“ Pity the blind—pity the blind !” The mournful recurrence of the supplication harrowed me, particularly when I lacked a halfpenny. Another of these alleys contained a fragrant shop which canonized the manes of Sally Lunn, inventress of

those luscious cakes Mrs. Bullock used to butter for her parties.

Where are ye, too, ye well stocked tenements flanking these prolific lanes, from whose social garrets opposite neighbours could salute, with cuffs or with embraces? Ye gutters redolent, and teemful of miasma, where are ye now?—Gone, ye all are gone! and on your site a proud usurping street sweeps impudently glorious of its upstart domes!—Chapmen now hold sway, haply, on the very ground where once the *high-born* clans of the *Mac-Arthy* Desmond, disdaining vulgar traffic, had lived, and loved, and starved—and given bloody noses to each other.

And ye, too, are departing piecemeal, ye wondrous domiciles, illustrative of more varied architecture than ever Vitruvius' brain elaborated; ye nondescript erections of zig-zag pattern and multifarious height; ye scotched and notched and scalloped gables; ye balconies, friendly to kind intercourse, shaming the Venetian.—“Poor Cork,” writes Mrs. Mulligan, “is set a going like the bog of Allan, and running *solus bolus* over Patrick's bridge and up the dyke.”

This digression is extorted by a comparison of what Cork now is, with what it was at the epoch of my first sojourn there; "when the good old customs were kept up," saith Katy, "when pigs could walk the streets without being kidnapped, and cards brought aged folk together, and younger folk could use their legs and lungs and not be excommunicated."

Had I finished my last chapter with others of my actors than Quinilla and Quinilla's friend, I might not have sung this *prosy* monody on Cork; there is still, I apprehend, some leaven of my old aversion working, to detain me from our cousin. So many strange, and sorrowful as strange events, had been crowded within the interval of our separation, that memory was affected by it as by the lapse of years. Quinilla had been, not expunged indeed, but partially effaced; and I stared as at a new-created cousin when she stood before me. That mouth, capacious of trope and metaphor, was pouring forth its treasures, profitless; a thousand wheels were rumbling in my ears; I could hear but scraps of the elegant eulogia pronounced on Mrs. Bullock, of whom my furtive glances gave me

only the assurance, that her stature was prodigious, her nose flat, her mouth wide, and her beard prominent. At length I grew accustomed to the din, and conscious of my cousin's welcome, which had, first, been lavished on my aunt and Helen.

"Sit down, Watty, sit down my man.—He's so modest, Ma'am," (addressing Patagonia)—"And how do you like the city, dears?—a nice change for you!—Sister, here's a chair—Helen, sit upon the sofa.—Why then, what kept you all so long?—we have trudged here every evening for a week, thinking you'd like a little news. They are building a new jail—two new jails—my friend Mr. Bullock has been left a fortune. Theodore is gone into the army; looks elegant in regimentals—*Kit Hutchisson* got him a commisison. The actors are coming—not yet though; but there's wax-work. Snug lodgings don't you think *Laurentia*?—three very decent bed-rooms, this room for a parlour, the use of a kitchen, a coal-hole, and a little pantry—this table drawer is lined with tin for tea and sugar—so convenient, isn't it?—I hope *Katy* and *Mrs. Green* won't quarrel though—

both a little snappish ! Patricius has got himself a fine berth !—ten *pound* a year at Mrs. Bullock's !—I gave him *such* a character ! You'll be frightened at the rent ; we thought it high, considering poor Fitzgerald's situation. Fielding *would* manage it his own way though, and so.—But where, in the name of goodness, is Miss Marion ?”

Fatigue, grief, the unexpected company, and the abrupt question, iron nerves only could withstand.—My aunt fainted.—Quinilla kept up a bitter squeal, while, assisted by her friend, we bore our beloved relative to a bed in the adjoining apartment. The prompt measures of our stalworth, good-natured ally, restored her. Helen represented the state of my aunt's health as an excuse for dismissing visitors. Mrs. Bullock said, “to be sure” to every thing, shaking me so vehemently by the hand, and reiterating so many kind “good byes,” that I began to think we must have known each other in some pre-existent state. Quinilla, for once, was guilty of discretion and good-nature ; she kissed her sister, bidding her be comfortable, that Theodore would take care of *her* at any

rate ; then promising to come to us the morrow, soon as she could *get her things on*, she departed, stopping, however on the landing for a slight *confab* with Mrs. Mulligan—Katy, in a stage whisper, briefly imparted the leading circumstances of Marion's flight, keeping Sanford's rank concealed, perhaps in pity to the deserted maiden. Our cousin's comment insinuated a compliment on her own sagacity—"Didn't I tell you, Katy, it would come to this?"—In sooth Quinilla was incorrigible ; the misery her egregious folly had entailed, had not made the slightest impression on her mind.

We were now called on to oppose my aunt, who insisted on visiting the prison without delay. She could not sleep, she said, with such a weight of untold wo upon her. Our secret wishes prompted us to concede, but we observed that the tottering invalid was obliged to sit down twice before she could reach the chamber-door, and we besought her to postpone this visit until a night's repose should nerve her.—"Repose children!—repose! with a few yards only between me and my poor husband!—I must go—I must!"

Slauveen however cut the matter short—Neddy Nabbs the turnkey wouldn't as much as hear of such a thing. Neddy's motto was —'honest people should lie down with the lamb'—therefore *his* flock was locked up safe at sunset.

When I retired to my chamber the oppression, which the day's varieties had driven off, returned with fourfold intensity. I should never more see Marion!—The longer I reflected upon her character, the firmer was established the opinion that deceit must have been practised to subvert principles so fraught with home affections. Even in her wanderings these powerful tendencies were manifested. The evening I last saw her she had angrily arraigned our seeming apathy towards her uncle; could she at that moment have contemplated forsaking the very person she so bitterly bewailed; I wearied myself with conjecturing the scope of those arguments that had been so promptly effective in annihilating such deep-rooted attachments.

While absorbed in meditation, I was insensible to noise, but the moment I addressed

myself to sleep the clatter of carts and pattens rang through my sensorium. Sleep!—sleep should never more be sealed by the low bleat, the singing of the brook, the pigeon's love-note!—The dreams of my woods and wilds should never more entrance my thinking power, nor imagination, wakeful and alert, bear me to the porch of my philosophers. I was thenceforward to dream of city horrors; and when fatigue overpowered clamour I did dream of them; of chaffering in the mart, of crying oysters.

I was awakened by shouts beneath my window. Two root-women were wrestling valiantly; the strain of muscle was sublime; their classical equipment gave the full play of brawny arms and legs to the spectator: they grinned, and struck and shook each other, with gladiatorial earnestness; their tongues elaborating anathema that none but an Irish pate could have engendered,—“Go it beauties!” cried a boy, kicking down the baskets of the pugilists, who, bequeathing their roots and battle to the mob, instantly united in pursuit

of the offender. The crowd caught up the spoil, clamouring; a pitched engagement was the consequence, and a shower of onions enlivened the scene of action.

Dim panes and foggy atmosphere gave me but partial glimpses of Cork's indigenous matinal amusements, and of the architecture of the city's main-street. It was of the order *composite* I could discern, but the models it was copied from, my charts of ancient cities did not furnish. The builders seemed to have evidenced the national love of fun in their inclination to the outrageously grotesque. An opposite shop-window, decorated with three golden balls, and jutting proudly from its neighbours, became the object of my contemplation.—What costly merchandize!—surely Cork was the emporium of the world!—I no longer marvelled at the splendour of Quinilla's trinketry—" 'Tis finer than Ballygobbin," exclaimed Slauveen, who now entered with my trunk and noted the direction of my eyes; "but wait till you see the Grand Parade, an' the statue o' King George, an' Miss O'Toole a

strutting on it, with one of every trinkum in the pawn-broker's forenent you, stuck upon her."

I hastened down stairs; my aunt, observing that Helen "looked like a ghost," pressed her to the breakfast she scarcely touched herself, and scolded me for wanting appetite, while she paced the room in a fever of impatience.

Marshalled by Slauveen we hurried to the prison, too earnest to heed the crowds that jostled us. A few minutes walk brought us to a massive building with thickly grated windows, most aptly characterized by the epithet *sullen*; it formed the sides and superstructure of a deep high gateway, under which we passed. Slauveen stopped before a door ominously secured in the side-wall of this gloomy porch;—" *Uskil a dhurru*,"* and a smart tapping, were answered with a promptitude which proclaimed a disposition in the warder friendly to his visitor. The bolts revolved alertly; a peering, cautious, curious face, well ploughed with wrinkles converging

* *Uskil a dhurru*—open the door.

round a mouth that seemed on the perpetual snigger, was thrust beneath my sister's bonnet, the offensive action modified by a twenty times repeated welcome.

"How is the masther Neddy?" said Slauveen, as we mounted a steep narrow stair.

"How would he be but hale and hearty in such an' ilegant retirement honey? yourself is looking poorty poorly from the air an' exercise I'm thinking."

The dialogue was continued in an under tone until we reached a landing, from which diverged dark passages studded with bars and padlocks. —Doors became distinct: I thought the fastenings of that which Neddy stopped before, an age unclosing—at last it creaked; I pushed it in, and saw—Marion!

My uncle's arms enfolded me, but a film shut out every one but Marion—I heard broken ejaculations, sobs and questions. Marion called upon our names with the loudness of delight: astonishment was so all-subduing that I could not return her caresses: she was now hanging upon my neck, now upon my aunt's, now locked in the embrace of Helen.

“ Oh ! I thought it a thousand years until I saw you all again—Didn’t you guess that I was coming here ?—You didn’t believe that I could leave you for any one but my own, own uncle did you ?—How horrid to lock him up in such a place—what hearts they had who built it !—No wonder he is ill ; it would kill *me* to look up day after day towards that grating, and feel that I was alone, quite alone, with nothing of Heaven but this scanty light—Don’t weep aunt ; he shall not stay here another day, no not an hour ! Lord Sanford promised to pay the debt ; he promised to take my uncle back to you ; he promised to build a castle in the glen ; and so—I married him.”

The chimerical hopes, I had conceived from her return to us, fled—Fielding’s information was established—I echoed my uncle’s deep drawn sigh.

“ Don’t sigh so Walter,” resumed Marion ; “ Helen does not sigh—Ah, Helen ! I never knew how much I loved you until I left you—I forgot your conduct to poor Sanford—Poor !” “ she repeated ; “ he is not poor ; he is a rich

lord, Helen!—rich enough to make our *poor*, *rich*!—and I—I am happier than ever. I have no weight upon my heart *now*; Lord Sanford will recover; no one can accuse me *now*.”

My uncle exchanged glances of mournful meaning with his wife—“You love this young man I hope my child?”

Marion looked surprised—“I said I loved him when I married him; I would not have deceived him, even for your sake, uncle—How sad I felt when Kitty told me he was sent away unkindly!—how glad I was to meet him!—Love him!—indeed I love him!”

“Where is Lord Sanford, Marion?” said my aunt.

“Gone to meet you; he rode off with Mr. Fielding; we did not know you had arrived—I was here before the light could find its way through those sulky bars this morning.”

“Ah Fitzgerald!” said my aunt, “these things are new to you—I couldn’t write about them, because I didn’t know myself two days ago that our young guest would turn out a—”

“Your aunt and I have many things to talk

over my dear children ;”—said my uncle hastily,
—“ Walter take your sisters to their homes ;
you shall come to me to-morrow.”

His commands had always met unquestioning obedience, but we surveyed, lingering and with dismay, the spectral form that bent to bless us —The door was closed behind us, and the harsh barriers were replaced.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Why how now cousin? wherefore sink you down?"

SLAUVEEN emerged from Neddy's lounging-room when we reached the stair-foot—" 'Tis *she*, in earnest," he vociferated: "that liar Nabbs downfaced us, 'twas nothin' but a lady!"

"Whisht you *gomeril*," whispered Nabbs, bustling forward, "you'll be transported! 'tis Lady Sanford; she come here in a coach, you fool, and two fine footmen!"

"Slauveen!" ejaculated Marion joyfully.—

"Didn't I tell you 'twas *herself* Neddy Nabbs?—let us out man."

" Mightn't that *distressful* coach be tired o' waitin' Misther McQuillan? 'tis standing ever since the peep o' day under Goggan Barry's sign, across the bridge there; sha'n't we call your honor's footmen Ma'am?"

" I would rather walk," said Marion.

" But your honor's footmen will come for orders," remonstrated Nabbs; as he reluctantly applied his ponderous key.

" Then order um to drive to where they come from," said Slauveen; " do you think 'tis Mrs. Nabbs you're talking to?"

We proceeded homeward; Marion, full of her new project, planned out a cot and garden for every pauper of our glen: bogs were drained and barren land converted to rich pasture by her talismanic tongue: a romantic site was fixed on for the embryo castle; the days of ancient chronicles were to be revived, the days of feudality and chivalry, of Kerns and Galloglasses, of Fileas and pensioned harpists. Slauveen was nominated leader of the military band, blind Johnny the castle bard, and Driscoll the castle seneschal: Grace should indite and execute the law, the Brehon of a Mote which

should overawe the vassals of the seignory: Katy and her *Sub*, the turnspit, were appropriately commissioned; dog-wheels, by infrangible edict, were prohibited; and Lanty Maw, caparisoned like the palfrey which bore the lady Isabel, first wife of Amory St. Lawrence, was appointed sumpter-horse general, and destined to bear all the brides in our vicinity to Ballygobbin chapel.

The walk from our cottage to this castle should combine every variety of scenic beauty, should wind through woods and fairy dells, dotted with mossy seats for Walter: but not a stone of our cottage was to be displaced: the study, indeed, should seem built of books: she knew she should prefer it to the castle library. The headland and the dear old ruin would be our haunts, as formerly: the little weavers should again assemble; no longer stinted to a solitary implement, each child should have a spinning wheel and wool cards.

Before Marion had sketched half her plans Slauveen was thundering at the '*rapper*' "'Tis not so large as our Hotel," said Marion, eyeing the mansion of Mrs. Green; "What a noisy

place this Cork is ; don't you wonder Helen how people ever thought of building towns—shutting themselves in, from skies and trees, with smoke and ugly houses.—How glad we shall be to go home again !’

Marion's perfect security of our restoration to *home* gave Helen confidence ; her cheeks glowed, her eyes sparkled, as the prospect of a dreary town-existence was obliterated ; she became as skilful in reclaiming waste and quagmire as her sister, as expert in castle-building ; and both sisters were diligently erecting turrets, cottages, and barns, when Fielding, followed by Lord Sanford, entered—Helen flew, both hands extended, towards Fielding, but retreated on seeing his companion—I grew feverish—Sanford advanced without the least embarrassment, saluting me as eagerly and frankly as if our brotherhood had been established under kindred impulses. Helen drew back when he approached her, coloring deeply, but Marion flung an arm around her husband's and her sister's necks, compelling them to an embrace.

Sanford addressed us as if we formed an undivided household, fondly and playfully intro-

ducing Lady Sanford. The constraint at first was painful, but I know not how it was, although I continued silent, more cheering thoughts began to weaken my forebodings. Marion's recovery seemed no longer doubtful; I had observed her, cautious of admitting hope, but my closest scrutiny did not detect the least recurrence of her malady. Enthusiasm had ever heightened all her sentiments, had ever characterized their tone; a fervor which in others might have appeared fantastic, in Marion was simply natural; it was an outlet to her exuberant affections, and was not less intense a year before than at the present moment. Those unsettled glances, sharpened tones, and swift perturbed transitions—(which even to think upon quickened my pulsation)—had given place to her naturally sportive and ingenuous air, to her laughing eye-beams, and to that low persuasive accent which made her influence so absolute. A happy sigh was bearing off one half my cares—I looked at Fielding; he was sitting at a table apart from our little group apparently occupied in writing, but occasionally fixing on Lord Sanford—who was gaily assent-

ing to every demand of Marion—a look so reprehensive that my hopes were clouded.

At last the direct question was put by Marion—should not her uncle be liberated immediately.—Sanford paused ; Marion tremulously repeated her enquiry—it was evaded—she persisted—might she go at once to pay the debt.—I apprehended a painful *disembroglio*, but Fielding, laying down his pen, said quietly, “Some days must unavoidably elapse, Lady Sanford, before arrangements can be entered on for your uncle’s release.”

Marion’s eyes flashed angrily : she turned to Helen, and I caught the whisper—“That man is always interfering Helen, I do so wish that he would go away.”—She stopped, for flippant feet were tripping up the stairs.

“Are they at home Patricius? is my sister better Katy? Mrs. Green is gone to market I suppose ; how do they like the lodging? am I dragged?—such streets! gutter two inches thick ; the jaunting-car is coming for me ; shew Mr. Dionysius Bullock into the back parlour.” Quinilla fizzed into the room : she drew up at sight of Marion and Lord Sanford, compressed

her lips, curving them disdainfully, and made the bend of a grand Duchess.

"Well, Helen I had no notion of meeting such good company—*Some* people have little or no shame left ; *I* couldn't shew my face under such circumstances—where is my poor sister ? quite upset I dare say."

She spoke in a whisper made convenient to our ears ; Helen replied that my aunt was at the prison.

"Quite right," observed Quinilla, "quite right ; every *proper* wife should share her husband's lot, however hard it is. I myself could starve with the man I love ; and yet—I mightn't choose to *run away* with him. Poor Laura has no more cause to plume herself upon the match she made than other folk ; although Fitzgerald's grand relations cocked up their noses at her ! wouldn't condescend to own a man, indeed, who married an O'Toole ; but I despise the upstart set !—they're not in *Tyger Neck*—Monimia Bullock dotes on literature ; she has all the Irish annals at her fingers' ends."

Our cousin had been standing while she

elecutionized; Sanford arose and offered her his chair, gravely enquiring for his friends the Bullocks. Quinilla surveyed him from head to foot, looking dubious whether to bow to him or box his ears—"Dear me! you are wonderful polite Sir."

"Your chair is on my gown, Quinilla," said Marion.

The coolness of this remark, which manifested complete indifference to the previous spiteful annotations, encreased our cousin's bile; magniloquence and majestic airs dwindled into vulgar common-place. She turned sharply on our friend,—“Well Mr. Fielding, have you found a mare's nest? where's the money to come from for diet and lodging, I'd be glad to know? I and Theodore are willing to support our sister, but we wo'n't put up with her maintaining other people's children.”

“We will not be a burden on your kindness Miss O'Toole,” said Helen.

“Oh, Helen! *you* are welcome to remain with Laura; and Watty too, poor creature! Mrs. Bullock has something in her eye for

him ; but *interlopers* !" She glanced at Marion, " interlopers may choose to make long visits for convenience. Mr. Sanford seemed flush of cash at all times ; he can't be at a loss for lodging and a dinner, though 'pon my word, he dined quite long enough at our expense."

" Dear Madam," said Lord Sanford, " your frankness is so refreshing in these sophisticated times ! vulgar minds are scrupulous of mentioning obligation—Have you made out the bill ?" He unclosed his purse and bent inquisitively to the confounded damsel.

" This beats cook-fighting !" cried my cousin, jumping up as if electrified—" 'tis well for you, my chap, my brother isn't here !" she snatched the purse, and positively flung it in his face.

" That creature should be strangled, Walter," whispered the young nobleman ; " any one has a right to abate a nuisance."

" None of your whispers," screamed Quinilla ; " you are all of the same kidney. I can make you laugh, may be, at the wrong side of

your mouth—you had best be quiet." The rattling of wheels interrupted her.

"Pray compose yourself, Miss O'Toole," said Fielding.

"Me! I'm composed enough, I thank you, Sir; 'tisn't vagrant trampers can provoke me—not they indeed—what a fool I am!"

"How *can* you libel such capacious intellect," said Sanford.

"Hold your sneering, sir, or else—" The wheels came to a full stop; so did our cousin; she shook her flounces—" 'Tis the Bullock's jaunting-car; I forgot it was to call for me—and Dionysius too in the back parlour! what could I be dreaming of? run down Watty, ask him just to come up stairs—no don't—open the window can't you—stop—you *are* so awkward—city windows don't go with buttons stupe."

Up flew the sash: Quinilla looked out and uttered the monosyllable "What!" in that long drawn cadence peculiar to a state of inordinate surprise—"Why then what's that?" she added, "in the name of the nine wonders! A chariot and laced liveries! the very chariot, as

sure as fate, that Mr. Bullock saw passing the shop door this morning: the horses started at the sign. Good law! the footman is jumping down—he's knocking at this door why!—there's a tattarara!—Some of Fitzgerald's quality relations after all—where's Patricius? Molly Green's girl is always going to the door with a dirty apron on into the bargain!"

"Lord Sanford's carriage," cried the man.

"Lord Sanford's carriage," cried the girl at every stair she mounted; "Lord Sanford's carriage," she repeated, sticking between the door and the door-jamb, and modestly displaying a tattered petticoat by tucking back the vituperated apron.

"There's no lord here," exclaimed Quinilla, "the girl's bewitched!"

Sanford with an inimitable air of sarcastic pleasantry led my sister forward;—"This is *Lady* Sanford, Madam; therefore I will assert my right to be *Lord* Sanford, even at the risk of impeaching Miss O'Toole's veracity."

Quinilla glared; moveless and rigid; stiffened by amazement; jaws fallen, eyes fixed on

nothing. "Salute your cousin, Lady Sanford," said the young nobleman, bending to the nymph.

"*Lady!*" ejaculated Quinilla, tittering hysterically; "that's a good joke, upon my word and honor it is!—a *lord!*! a *lord* indeed!" she laughed again so frightfully, that Sanford, with an expression of dismay, tendered her his salt-bottle.

"I beg you'll not alarm yourself *my lord*; I'm not to be your laughing stock a second time—a lord! a chariot too! Miss Marion knew what she was at: a lord! *I* was never fit to deal with tricksters."

I did not think it possible that my sister's innocent face could have expressed the ineffable contempt which aggravated her retort.—"And yet how dexterously you imposed upon us all cousin, when you deceived us into the belief that Lord Sanford was in love with you."

"Nobody was speaking to you ma'am—how did I know he was a lord? a lord! I won't believe a word of it."

Helen looked alarmed, and in an under tone assured Quinilla of the truth.

“’Tis true Helen is it? *may* be so, and *may* be too his *Lordship* shall learn, to his cost, that I might have made a better Lady than *my Lady* there.”—She cast an incomparably spiteful glance at Marion, caught up her muff, and flew off, *sans adieu*, forgetting the jaunting-car and Dionysius.

Lord Sanford, too polite to descant on our kinswoman’s absurdities, protested he had a world of letters to despatch, and hurried Marion to the carriage, promising she should return early on the morrow. Fielding departed for the prison shortly after, and Helen and I were left to talk over the late incidents, and to indite a page or two of text-hand, with the news of Marion’s restoration, for Grace McQuillan.

CHAPTER XIV.

"He hung the instructive symbol o'er his door."

A FEW days elapsed, varied only by visits from the Sanfords and visits to the prison — Marion, too sanguine and too confiding to doubt the establishment of her Utopia, had always some new project to discuss with Helen. The latter, into whom my comments upon Sanford's character had infused a suspicion of its hollowness, listened with some abatement of assurance, particularly as my uncle, in our prison conferences, when Marion was not present, spoke decidedly of awaiting the period which the law appointed for the enlargement of the insolvent

debtor. This prospect of his ultimate release, to those who had contemplated a life-long imprisonment, would have opened consolation, had he not persisted in rejecting all amelioration of his captivity.—“He starves upon the jail allowance although we’d trust him sooner than the bank,” said Neddy—“It murders Mrs. Nabbs to see him wasting.”

My aunt expostulated, even angrily. The reply was characteristic and decisive—I will not lessen by a scruple the little you have left: I have been culpably selfish in—”

“You selfish!” interrupted my aunt—“you, who gave your all away!”

“Therefore was I selfish. There is no merit in gratifying a favorite virtue at the expense of another not so pleasant. Profuse benovolence may be termed amiable, but I have learned from a monitor we equally revere, that our very virtues are pernicious if indulged beyond the limits of a wise discretion. When generosity trenches upon justice it deserves chastisement; there was an inextinguishable moral weakness in the act by which I risked the maintenance of those most dear and worthy with

my own, because I should have felt it painful to say *no* ; therefore I repeat that I am not to be classed with the unselfish."

"But scanty, meagre, prison fare!" faltered my aunt.

"The coarsest fare is less undermining to my health than would be the daily thought that I was in my own person contracting another debt. I *must* incur this obligation for those whom I have rendered destitute, but never for myself, never for myself."

Although this resolution of my uncle filled me with anxiety, and made me nervously eager for employment, yet I felt a negative satisfaction in reflecting that when the bubble which held poor Marion's hopes of his deliverance should burst, *he*, at least, would not be disappointed. Meantime our table was profusely served; profusely, according to our ideas of the parsimony we ought to practise. Our debt to Fielding would swallow at least one half the fund which Grace had scraped up from the relics of our little property. My aunt remonstrated with Mrs. Green on an expenditure as far beyond her wishes as her means, insinuating that

she was poor, and must look for other lodging, or be allowed to furnish her own board—Our landlady made light of these misgivings—*'T*would all come strait as Cook-street *she engaged*; every body knew that Cork flogged Europe for cheap living; 'twas beautiful to take a turn in the meat-market and see the lovely beef and mutton selling for a song; her canary bird would eat as much as we did; *'t*would all come strait as the South Mall.

Helen thought our landlady a gem—"Ah! Helen," said my aunt, "Mr. Fielding is the gem; but this must not continue. Poor Grace hid all her little savings in my trunk; should we consume in idleness the bread of the industrious?—and yet"—her pale face crimsoned—"yet Helen I'd rather be obliged to them, than to the man who could beguile my simple child with falsehoods!"

"You do not think it was deceit, all deceit," said Helen—"You do not think his love for Marion is pretended?"

"No; but will it last? will it stand the test—who can rely upon a man that has no consciousness of wrong?—Such are your uncle's

words, children, and you know how merciful Fitzgerald is. I saw, myself, that this young man could act and speak a lie without compunction; therefore I knew he never meant to settle in the glen.—*He* liberate your uncle!—He might with safety have proposed it—Fitzgerald would scorn to say ‘thank you’ to the worthless!—If Marion finds out that he breaks his word ’twill crush her—’tis this alarms us—my trustful, generous child!”

“Does Mr. Fielding think Lord Sanford dissembles still?” said Helen, trembling; “does he think my sister’s husband wicked?”

“Wicked?—I did not mean to say that he was wicked, child. I never knew more than one, that I could truly say was wicked; but Lord Sanford is a will-worshipper—he has no moral mile-stone to keep him in the road of rectitude; no monitor to strike the warning when his whimsies lead him wrong. He is not false for the mere love of falsehood, but because he finds it pleasanter to tell lies than baulk his inclinations. Look at the mischief he has done—yet did he ever say ‘’twas my

fault'—did he ever even seem to *think* it was? Hearts are broken by the reckless, the unscrupulous, the insensible, as well as by the wicked—I can vouch for that; but this young man, besides, is full of self-conceit—he thinks every thing he does is right because he does it."

"But Marion is so unassuming, so full of tenderness for others, so forgetful of herself—he must admire her character, and we are so apt to imitate those whom we admire. Even you, aunt, you that we always thought so good, you say that you are much better since our acquaintanceship with Mr. Fielding.—He has improved us all indeed. Grace said she never thought there could be such a man."

My aunt, who when excited always paced the room, at these words stopped abruptly, sat down, and seemed stricken with some new disquietude. She fixed her eyes on Helen, and said, after a long pause—"Have *you* guessed, Helen, for *I* have, that Mr. Fielding is not the person Lord Sanford's convenient tongue represented him to be?—I mean as to his sphere in life."

"You do not suspect that Mr. Fielding has deceived us also!" cried Helen, glowing with the earnestness of her enquiry.

"He never professed that he was anything, therefore he never cheated us; but the fellow-traveller of Lord Sanford cannot be the poor man we imagined him."

"Well, aunt, whether he be poor or rich his merit is the same; he is our friend and our adviser still; he saved Walter's life and Marion's; he seems the instrument of Heaven;—if he be rich, does that make him less admirable?"

My aunt's gloom encreased—"I should not be surprised to learn that he is as high in rank as his companion, Helen."

"That is impossible," said Helen quickly—"If he had a title he would have sanctioned Lord Sanford's falsehood by permitting himself to be addressed as *Mr.* Fielding."

"He might have generous motives for concealment," said my aunt; "and without a title he might still be a man of rank."

"You would not love him the less for that?" said Helen—"I am quite sure *I* could not."

"You would not *like* him the better for his

rank?" enquired my aunt, with pointed emphasis.

"Better!" repeated Helen; "I do not know that I *could* like him better."

My aunt looked still more restless—"Rank makes wide distinctions Helen. A poor artist may settle where he pleases, but a man of rank has claims—has—Few, very few of elevated station yield to their fancies like Lord Sanford, Helen."

"I do not think that Mr. Fielding is a man to yield to fancies," replied Helen, with perfect ease of manner—"Do you suppose he means to settle in our glen?—He liked the scenery I know,—Ah! *we* can never settle there!" Her eyes filled with tears, but my aunt's cleared.

I had been silent during this dialogue, fearing some reference which might compel me to corroborate the surmise as to Fielding's rank.—"Whatever our good friend may be," resumed my aunt, "it behoves us to acquit us of our debt and to economize. I should be happier, children, if our food were simpler; it makes me so remorseful to think that we have such substantial fare, while Fitzgerald is living

on a crust. I see no prospect of our earning any thing; Quinilla promised to look out for plain work—you know I'm fond of work—but I have scarcely seen her."

We would not grieve my aunt by mentioning her sister's visit and outrageous conduct.

"And Nancy Bullock, too; she used to be good-natured; at least when she was Nancy Carberry. I thought she would have helped her poor old schoolfellow to earn something. 'Tis comforting to see you smile so Helen—have you dreamed of a fairy-board my darling."

I had before remarked that when our exigencies were touched upon, Helen's countenance wore an air of calm assurance; but she was silent. I left the room and hastened down stairs, lest the impulse should subside which spurred me to make, at once, the effort I had for many days revolved. Our landlady was chaffering at the door for eggs. I enquired my way to Mr. Bullock's.

"'Tis only thirteen door-steps off; go strait along towards South gate, but don't go under it, strait as a die, until you see a man, sky high, with a hammer an' a bellows an' a crook-

ed leg, standing upon nothing—that's the house."

The Irish, through vigour of ideality, jump to their conclusions; they imagine it a waste of words to be precise, because they estimate your quickness of conception by their own, representing often, as in this instance, the *sign* for the thing signified. With Mrs. Green's perspicuous direction I hurried on, gaping upward for the aeronaut, and soon espied the Bullock mansion, identified by a dingy monster posted mid-air between the basement and the house-top, "with a hammer an' a bellows an' a crooked leg, standing upon nothing," but secured by a massive iron girdle in his aerial station—" *Ex pede Herculeus*," said I—"and why not Vulcan?"

A window bayed out at either side of the shop-door, above which the lame son of Juno flourished his Cyclopean emblems, and just within the threshold stood the "ould brass Dutch girl holding two lanky sixes," to which Slauveen, in days of eld, had likened little Berga. A Brazier's merchandize is not interesting. I grew faint-hearted as I glanced

around the murky shop which I had predestined for my habitation—"Is Mrs. Bullock here?" said I, addressing a stubby, thick-nosed, little man, whose head, clothed in a buckled wig of rough red, stuck just above the counter, and casting the while a rueful look towards an inner door, half glass, through which the comfortless array of a small, dark, fireless room was visible.

"You must go round to the *hall*-door if you want my wife, Sir," said the little man.

I made excuses, and did as I was bid, palpitating. Slauveen himself, in holiday attire, admitted me. It was reception-hour, when the services of our joint domestic were required at Mrs. Bullock's. I hardly knew him; his hair was powdered; he wore a livery coat, a black cravat, and white silk stockings. Instead of the usual free, affectionate address, licensed by his fidelity and fostership, he bowed, took my hat, unquestioned told me the ladies were at home, in an accent quite unlike his own, tripped up stairs before me, and, ere I could take breath, he had strutted into a gaily furnished room, announced Mr. Fitzgerald, and shut the door

upon me, as if conscious that without this precaution I would have disgraced myself by a retreat. Mirrors and busts, vases and pictures were quivering around me, as if reflected in a troubled stream. The pressure of a ponderous hand, and "how d'ye do then?" seven times repeated, dispelled my vertigo. I was dragged towards the fire place, thrust into an arm chair, and introduced to Miss, and Mr. Bullock junior, before I could pronounce a word, or recollect what had brought me into such glowing latitudes.

The lady of the house still manifested her overpowering friendship; she stirred the fire, pushed my chair onward till the fender stopped it, knew that I was frozen when I was positively roasting, enquired for my aunt by endearing epithets, hoped that beautiful soul, my sister, and Monimia would soon be intimate, apologized for not having called to congratulate us upon the wedding—She had waited till the week was out; was dying, so was Monimia, to see Lady Sanford. Miss O'Toole had told them she was quite as handsome as her sister, if not handsomer,

Reply was useless; it would not have been heard; I bowed as fast as I could to every condescension; at last my courtesy was tired out; no Mandarin could have kept up the nodding, so I refrained, and fixed my eyes upon the carpet, wondering somewhat at the last paradoxical assertion, nay almost doubting its veracity. But Mrs. Bullock had quoted truly; a hitherto undiscovered peculiarity in our cousin's character became gradually revealed to me; she was tenacious of *our* consequence because she thought it propped her own, and, however 'splenetic and rash' in her domestic dealings, she had puffed us to her city *coterie*, (where my sisters could never be her rivals,) as miracles of loveliness and literature. Quinilla must have walked off her rage in her transit from Mrs. Green's to Mrs. Bullock's on the day of the discovery, for Marion's marriage with a Lord was boasted of, I found, with all the pomp of the O'Toole hyperbole, to that family and their acquaintances.

I could not muster courage to explain the purport of my visit before the younger Bullocks, who I felt were staring at me, though I dared

not reciprocate the compliment: but Dionysius, luckily remembering that he and Monimia had promised to walk up the dyke with Miss McCarthy, relieved me of this encumbrance. My wishes were then unfolded in language as lucid and coherent as I could command. Mrs. Bullock looked exactly what she said she was—amazed—"Goodness gracious!—the brother of a lord!—Miss O'Toole, indeed, *before the late affair*, had spoken of my *classics*, and had requested a situation for me in her household, which nobody in Cork was competent to fill—But the brother of a lord!—the brother of a lord!"—Though utterly unable to connect my classics with the sale of saucepans, a certain benignant character in the aspect of my new acquaintance which countervailed her threatening dimensions, led me to persist in my request, and at last I succeeded tolerably, in making her comprehend that the brother of a lord might prefer, to being a lord's pensioner, a life of humble independence. The explanation which ensued, in turn excited *my* amazement. As to a shop assistant she must put her *reto*, as Monimia called it, upon that. Mr. B. intended to

take the managing part of the concern himself provided he could find a clever secretary. He liked the counter better than the counting-house. The Birmingham correspondence rather hampered him. She had conceived from Miss O'Toole's description that I could unite that office with those of tutor to Dionysius and occasional preceptor to Monimia.—Di. was a *leetle* slow at Latin, but Monimia would make up for it; she was an astonishing girl! quite beyond Cork masters! such a capacity for languages! mistress of French; had learned up to the *propria quæ maribus* in Latin, and knew every letter of the *Grecian* alphabet; but she wanted to talk *classics*, the very tongue, Quinilla said, was at her cousin's fingers' ends. She, Mrs. Bullock was too well off, and thought too much of talent to stint in salary; their relation had left them quite a noble fortune; but for Mr. B., who had a passion for making money, she would give up business and change to Patrick street, or the South Mall, or over the new bridge, or somewhere equally *recherché*; she was so harassed by living in a tho-

roughfare—Now, indeed, 'twould be more bearable; my aunt was a favorite old schoolfellow; for that matter she liked every one of us; as for Miss O'Toole, the house, Monimia said, was like the den of Erebus without her. There was only one thing more! she had heard we were quite intimate with a German Baroness, and Monimia had such a taste for German—Could I teach it?

Though confounded at the turn in my road to industry, I was too elated to falter in reply. Had I been called on to instruct the great and little B. into the bargain I should not have demurred. German, albeit I understood the language indifferently well, I could not teach; I assured my patroness, however, that my sister Helen spoke it fluently.

“But Miss Fitzgerald of course will live with Lady Sanford?”

Helen would not quit us, I was sure.

“Well,” Mrs. Bullock said, “she thought it the oddest thing, the very oddest thing, a lord’s connexions should dream of earning a livelihood, when they might be sure either of grand

matches, court places, or a pension. Even Miss O' Foole had never spoken on the subject of my tutorship for the last few days."

I again reverted to my love of independence.

"And very praiseworthy it is to give up such fine prospects," she replied. "For my part but for *your* sakes I am glad enough of it—quite a *bonus* to pick up people so uncommon clever!"—She supposed, though Miss O'Toole forgot to mention it, that my sisters could recite, and dance, and draw, and sing, and play on the piano, and could do frost-work, bobbin-work, bead-work, and embroidery.

I changed countenance; Helen knew none of these accomplishments.

"Nor even the Lord's wife?" cried Mrs. Bullock, staring.

Marion was even more ignorant; she knew no language but her own.

"Well, well, 'tis very vexing, but don't look chop-fallen—Monimia wants no teaching in these matters at all events—I defy any one to beat her in—'To be, or not to be,'—So our bargain is concluded—I'll speak to Mr. B. about the terms—we gave *Jacotin* a guinea for

six lessons—then there's the secretaryship and German—But are you sure Lord Sanford's sister-in-law will condescend to teach?—it looks so *out of character*."

She seemed bent on thinking this a moot point. I promised that Helen herself should guarantee my assurances, and took my leave. Slauveen presented my hat at the stair-foot with the bow of a drill-serjeant, never relaxing his unusual silence. I began to think it could not be Slauveen; we seemed total strangers; I loitered, as he held the door, obsequious.

"Patrick!" said a voice which issued from some ground apartment—"Did you hear the bell, Patricius?—open the door for Master Watty—Make haste, will you."

It was my cousin—I darted to the street—The little brazier stood at the shop-door, directing a man upon a ladder, who was furbishing the nose of the huge bellows Vulcan wielded. He nodded graciously—every thing in the Bullock mansion looked propitious!

CHAPTER XV.

A bag for my malt, a bag for my salt,
A bag for my leg of a goose ;
For my oats a bag, for my groats a bag,
And a bottle to carry my booze,
My noble master your charity !
Beggar's ballad.

I WALKED on briskly ; I trod on air, buoyant at a prospect which a few months back would have filled me with despondency. The sun-ray unvalued in fair weather is priceless in a storm ! Ranks of folios took their place in my imagination; instead of rusty frying pans ; a warm light apartment instead of a dark fireless one ; but above all arose the prison table comfortably served, and my uncle's sickly face glistening with satisfaction.—How Helen

would rejoice !—her capacity for teaching would now be made available.

Gold, the new object of my speculation, floated in my vision—"A guinea for six lessons !—then there's the secretary-ship and German !"—I repeated these words aloud, again and again ; doubtless to the amazement and amusement of the passers by.

Meantime I unconsciously traversed treble the distance between Vulcan and Mrs. Green's. At last I looked around, but looked without recognizing a single home-mark. I turned, and stood still ; there were many shops on either side, but not a pawnbroker's or brazier's ; before me was an ancient building—ancient I inferred it from its dusky hue—My ideas of Cork genius became wonderfully sublimated as I surveyed this structure—massive steps led to an open vestibule, through arches adorned with columns—above were windows, with pillars and pilasters supporting a balustrade and cornice—a cupola, surmounted by a ball and dragon, crowned the whole.—I was wafted to the fanes of my philosophers.

"Is that a Lyceum, or Cynosargus ?" said I,

addressing an old crone, who sat behind an apple-stall hard by the venerable fabric, sucking an inky pipe.

"Sell sarges !—get out !—no nor hucaback—Is it purtending not to know the 'change you are?—Not know the Royal 'change *ershiakin* /—Jillan," she bawled to a sister Grace—"Jillan look to your *allycumpane* ; there's sharpeners on the leg !—ax the name o' Castle Street there, too, my chicken, and filch a Kerry all the while ?—Your road is paved to gallows-green my 'cute one !"

Had I been detected in pocketing her kerry pippins, I could not have felt more thoroughly confounded : my feet and the paving stones seemed to incorporate—Not daring to incur rebuff the second by asking my way home, I peered around for some more accostable informant, and half way down the street just named, I espied a carriage standing before a book-seller's shop ; it was Lord Sanford's—A lady at the moment issued from the shop and sprang into the vehicle—I had not wit enough to hail the coachman as he was whirling past me—Sanford, looking from the window, ejaculated

"Walter!" and while the footman alertly turned down the step, my libellous Pomona pursued me with blessings and supplications—"Help—a poor struggler jewel—the skies be your bed—treat the lady to a *tissy-worth* an' good luck to your innocent face!" Marion laughed and threw her a sixpence—"Get up Jillan," said the hag, "and *sleuder* her out of another tester can't you!"

We drove off. The carriage was crammed with books, but nothing could divert my eyes from Marion. The fashion of her dress was changed, not to the mode of trimmings and pompoons, but to the chaste, and simply elegant attire which identifies itself with grace and beauty—Madame Wallenberg's dress was a model for dignified old age, Marion's for artless blooming womanhood.

"Well Walter, what do you think of Lady Sanford now?" said Lord Sanford, viewing her with a look of proud idolatry.

"I like my old fashions better," said Marion, "but Lord Sanford thinks they did not suit a Marchioness elect."—she laughed—"I am to be a Marchioness one day, he assures me—

How we shall astonish Grace! I wrote to her this morning; she is to have our glen-boys ready for a grand procession, and such a feast in the old ball-room! I gave directions about Johany's throne.—Do you think we shall go home *very* soon. Lord Sanford?"

"Certainly," he replied, with an air half caressing, half ironical.

"I have purchased a store of books," continued Marion—"These are for our younglings; these for you, Walter—Here are Helen's;—a pharmacopœia and portable laboratory for aunt—legends of saints for Granny—Look at my miscellanies; what a pile! poor Ireland's biographers and aspersers, from Cambrensis down to Doctor Ledwich!"

"And for whom are those you are so fondly hugging?" I enquired.

"For my uncle—We are going to that horrid prison—Have you seen Mr. Fielding lately Walter?"

"Not this morning."

"I attack him every day, but to no purpose," resumed Marion—"a perverse intolerable man!—so silent too; it would be a little satisfaction

to *hear* that things were in a train—But lawyers are shocking men to deal with Lord Sanford says—so dilatory—*do* tease Mr. Fielding Walter—make him tease the lawyers.”

I cast a reproachful look at the young nobleman; he received it with irritating graciousness, enquired for Helen, and invited me to dinner. I declined. He pulled the check-string, and asked whether I meant to accompany them further. The carriage was now opposite the lodging: I had been at the prison before breakfast and wished to communicate my plans to Helen; therefore I alighted. “Tell aunt she may expect a summons soon for home;” said Marion: “tell Helen I have such antiquated chronicles for her!—Good bye; remember you beset that Mr. Fielding—Sha’n’t we be glad to see *Sliebh Ghoul* again!”

Neither Helen nor my aunt was in our sitting-room. I sat down to think over the substance of my negotiation with Mrs. Bullock, but my recent interview was uppermost, and Marion’s happy face, so full of confidence that the husband would fulfil the lover’s promises!—How long was this delusion to be permitted

to exist?—Were we all cowards?—Was there no honest and indignant tongue to represent the truth? Fielding almost countenanced Lord Sanford's imposition by his evasive answers to Marion's enquiries—Did he palter through apprehension of the consequences?—He had perhaps detected some lurking symptom of her malady, which disappointment might encrease.

There was one strange incongruity evidenced by Marion's present conduct, which at this moment forcibly struck me as not harmonizing with her native intelligence of character. None of us had been more acute than she had been in observing the wants of our poor mountain neighbours, none more quick in suggesting expedients for their assuagement or removal; yet (although I was satisfied we were, enthusiastically as ever, the objects of her solicitude) I could not blind myself to the remarkable want of perception she now evinced in points she had once intuitively comprehended. That my uncle's agent had absconded she knew, but that we were in consequence reduced to poverty, nay, (but for the man she so obstinately disliked,) to beggary, she seemed to-

tally unconscious. This result would not have escaped her natural acuteness, hitherto so active in penetrating the necessities of those she loved. As to Lord Sanford, his carelessness on this head was quite in keeping with his character; the satisfaction of refusing his assistance was denied us.

These reflections were bringing me, by slow degrees, to the issue of my forenoon negotiation, when the knocker preluded a visitor. A hasty enquiry in Fielding's voice was followed by his entrance—Of late his aspect had been clouded, his manner reserved and taciturn, but to day he looked more sanguine of good, than even Marion in her bliss-inspiring credulity.—I surveyed him with a vague impression that something extraordinary had happened; it was not merely satisfaction his countenance expressed, it was suffused with that elation which even the most disinterested manifest when themselves are involved in the good tidings they announce—He took my hand but seemed unable to explain himself.

"There is *really* a prospect of my uncle's release," I exclaimed.

"And is there nothing else—do you give no additional meaning to my joy?"

"Marion—you think that Marion—or perhaps Lord Sanford may—"

Fielding shook his head.

"Well," said I, "my guesses go no further."

"Did I not so thoroughly understand your whimsical compound," said he laughing, "I should suspect you of double-dealing—Have you not guessed—that I love your sister Helen?"

I leaned upon the window-frame and hid my face; the weight of that one changeless grief which had been shifted for awhile, again pressed heavily. Fielding sat down and proceeded more sedately—"Accident, Walter, made you acquainted with what I neither endeavoured to set forth nor conceal—my real position in life. By the same accident you were satisfied, of course, that I never meant to impose a counterfeit upon your family. My father is a Baronet of ample fortune; I am his only son, his only child. This latter circumstance renders me doubly responsible for filial duties: to waive the claims of a wise and generous parent

would not be to advance my suit with Helen. Every particle of our intercourse has been imparted to Sir William Fielding; I have sketched every feature of your characters impartially; I have unfolded your distresses and involvements; I have confessed my unalterable attachment; but at the same time I expressed as unalterable a determination to abide by the judgment of my father.—What I have suffered since my letter was despatched, sufficiently proves that I did not rashly affirm my happiness rested upon his decision—he *has* decided—read his reply.”

I took the letter: its contents irresistibly fixed my thoughts.

“ My dear Son,

“ I remember my tremors when I addressed to *my* father the confession of a youthful attachment. His answer to his only son was succinct and emphatic; it relieved me of suspense, at least, upon the instant. I will not test *my* son more severely. Had I a doubt of that high integrity and clear-sighted intelligence

which is a pledge to me for your just delineation of the Fitzgerald family, although I might not say, as did my father on a similar appeal—‘Come home I command you and give up this ridiculous affair’—yet I would say ‘be cautious; examine further; suspend your declaration.’—But I know your fidelity to those principles which control inclinations unsanctioned by conscience and sound judgment. Therefore, I say ‘win for yourself the wife, give me the daughter, long sketched in my mind’s eye as a comforter for both of us.’ Your portrait of Helen, corresponds so accurately with my mind’s eye maiden, that were I of the order marvellous, I should assume your mountain-witch had had a hand in it. Give me a daughter, William, of that favorable stamp, physical and moral, of that active, enlightened intellect and strait-forward virtue, which may be my security, (in as far as foresight can secure us,) for descendants healthful and right-minded. I have no ambition for grand alliances, still less for rich ones, although my first wife was a Baron’s daughter with a plantation for her dowry. *Your mother was a poor gentlewoman*

but she bequeathed more riches to her son than all the wealth of both the Indies!—Wealth should be distributed; we have an over portion; if other treaties fail, a mortgage on my West-India property must set at liberty that fine old Irishman. But remember how often you and I have numbered prudence among the cardinal virtues; I may have many grandchildren; I wish them to be peaceful citizens: I would not give the young rogues reason to accuse their father's father of having compelled them by a foolish transfer of their property to take up arms against their fellow men, or, worse than all, to marry, for mere lucre, some imbecile creature."

I read the letter twice; and, without the least consciousness of what I was about, quoted aloud the passages which so singularly bore upon the interdict that severed us from conjugal ties.

Fielding was too much absorbed by his own gilded hopes to notice my abstraction. When I laid down the letter he resumed—"I would explain myself instantly to your uncle, but he is a man scrupulous of obligation; therefore,

and also in obedience to my father's wishes, I would make another attempt at compromise with his creditor before I venture my petition. Your aunt has too much sturdy frankness to be entrusted with our secret yet; a feather's weight of disappointment might irreparably injure Lady Sanford: her cure has been too sudden to be complete. I am averse from dissembling, but by silence alone we may prevent an immediate return of her malady, the only casualty I seriously apprehend; for (as there is no radical disease) prolonged tranquillity of mind will secure her recovery. She will not enquire by whom her uncle's freedom has been effected, and she need not be informed. The other giddy promise of Lord Sanford I must persuade him to fulfil; he may be induced to return, at least for a few months, to the glen, by my representations of Lady Sanford's very precarious state of mind. And now, Walter, will you aid me in my plan to form of your relatives and mine one household?—Marion's schemes might be effected without the Genii of the lamp and ring, though not exactly on her feudal plan. Our patriarchs, would nei-

ther of them, willingly give up their native land, but they will interchange long visits.—Helen—but now that I have come to her at last, I can proceed no further without seeing her?”

It would be vain to attempt describing my sensations—a deadly sinking of the heart grew more and more oppressive as my noble friend described his schemes for our felicity. Weak, nervous, morbidly sensitive, I found myself suddenly called upon to make a superhuman effort. The disorder of my mind became apparent: I struggled to speak—“You are agitated, Walter,” said Fielding; “I have been too abrupt; go to your chamber; compose yourself; our landlady informed me that Helen was in her own apartment: suspense unnerves me—will you say I wish to speak to her immediately?”

Suspense!—A hope flashed across me that she might not consent—“Does Helen know that you love her?” I exclaimed.

“That I love her as a brother; no more.”

“As a brother—would you be satisfied with that?”

Fielding paused a moment and then said emphatically, "no."

I darted from the room. There was still a chance I might be spared my dreadful task. I knocked at Helen's door—"Walter?" she exclaimed, "come in." She had been writing; her little table was strewn with papers; she turned upon me a face so eloquent of some high-wrought inspiration, and yet so calmly beautiful, that my troubled feelings were corrected.

"Did my aunt return with you?" she enquired, pushing aside the table. "You have had a long day at the prison, Walter—I shall go this evening."

"You keep a journal too," said I, evading a direct reply; "my aunt is not returned, but Fielding is below."

"I am glad of that," said Helen, quickly rising, "for I want to speak with him before aunt comes home—I have a project—Walter you look agitated—What has happened?—Marion!"

I tried to detain her—she passed me hastily.

"Helen," said I, "Helen, stop; stop one moment."

She returned; I was silent; she gave me a reproachful look and left the room—I heard her address Fielding; they continued to converse. I roused myself by a violent effort, ran up stairs, and shut myself into my chamber.

CHAPTER XVI.

All worldly joys go less
To the one joy of doing kindnesses.

Herbert

IN all my foregoing perplexities I could think, I could image sequences, and follow to its utmost link a chain of pleasureable or painful contemplations; but now the threads of my ideas seemed cut asunder. To arrange my plan of conduct was impossible. I sat down at the window, fixed my eyes upon the roof of the opposite house, and remained for upwards of an hour with no idea, distinct or indistinct, but of the blue slate tiling it was covered with.

The opening of the chamber door brought back my consciousness of the solemn trial which impended—I turned eagerly—It was Katy, panting, and descanting on the folly of “building houses twenty stories high o’ purpose to take the breath out of a body. She hated stories of all sorts, and wished people wouldn’t be *scroogling* themselves up in a cock-loft hatching um, when dinner was upon the table.”

Dinner!—the every day things of life had passed away. I followed Katy, who kept up an incessant grumble till we reached the dining room. Helen and my aunt were seated at the table, apparently with less appetite for food than meditation. I dared not look at Helen; a beam of joy from her expressive eyes would have annihilated the little self-possession I had left; my aunt’s countenance I *could* examine; I should have been glad to see a ray of joy from that—but a single glance informed me she had been weeping.

Fitzgerald was not well, she replied to my look of apprehension; she must go back immediately, and would remain at the prison all night. Helen and I need not be downcast;

there was nothing to alarm us; but she could not bear to eat; the very sight of dainties made her ill; Mrs. Green was bent on killing her; but for us she would remove entirely to the jail. Her tone was querulous for the first time since our date of sorrow.

How glorious I should now have been in the revealment of my morning's treaty, but for the terrible fear that Helen had consented; that I should be forced upon a task I felt was over heavy for my strength.—What!—I tell a sister so high-souled in her very lowliness, that we were co-heirs of fatuity or madness!—Should I be justified in such a disclosure?—The divulgement of an oracle had often brought about its own fulfilment. For a moment I listened to the suggestions of cowardly self-love—"Be silent—let them marry"—it was only for a moment.

While these reflections occupied me, Helen was soothing and remonstrating. I checked the current of my thoughts to note her voice—did it tremble?—did it imply the agitation of repressed delight?—No, it was, as always, clear, low, and musical; not more subdued than ordi-

nary, not less firm. My aunt, declaring that an unaccountable depression made every thing look black, embraced us, refused my attendance to the prison, bade us sleep soundly, and not wait breakfast for her.

We were left alone; Helen kept her eyes fixed upon the door until Katy had received her string of injunctions to make the children comfortable, until my aunt had reached the stair-foot, nay, until the clatter of her pattens re-echoed from the pavement. Day-light was withdrawing; the fire-light was partial; I could not well interpret Helen's countenance; but when the sounds grew faint, with a burst of emotion I thought her incapable of giving way to, she flung herself into my arms—"How could you wear a face to cheat me Walter?—How could you look so solemn?—the time was unfit for jest. I figured all horrible calamities—Marion had relapsed—you had quarrelled with Lord Sanford, and then—"

"And then," said I.

"And then to hear the actual wonder!—I was so astonished!—were you astonished?—was it amazement made you look so pale?—It

seemed impossible ; it seems now impossible—My uncle liberated—our home restored—you, you Walter, and my aunt, my poor, poor aunt, enjoying without remorse her former comforts, and the free healthful air she almost blames herself for breathing!"—She paused to dash away her tears.—"Walter, when Marion spoke of all these happy changes I doubted them, I bade myself not be too sanguine ; even before you spoke I saw Lord Sanford was not to be trusted ; but Mr. Fielding is, I feel he is ; the letter of that good Sir William is written on my heart !"

"You can remember its whole import, Helen?"

"Every sentence—every word!—At first I was appalled ; I doubted my resemblance to his portrait of a daughter, but I could not doubt our friend's assurances—Our friend!—Yes, I loved him as our friend, but I never dreamed that he was dearer."

"And is he then, so very dear, Helen?"

"Thank Heaven, he is—Oh, Walter ! to feel that I can truly love him ; that he loves me so truly ; to hear his generous projects for you

all!"—She fell back upon her chair, weeping violently.

I was thankful she did not see my face; I felt the blood forsaking it—"Helen," said I, "my dear, dear Helen! will you forgive me? I should have—"

"Forgive you; indeed I do: I blamed you for a little while—no more—the jest was like those Marion was so fond of in our merry days. Think of our return to the glen, Walter!—think of our visits to that kind-hearted Sir William Fielding!—think of the delight of making others weep with thankfulness!—Our old retainers—our little school—how the young things cried and clung to me!—Ah!—we shall laugh at Grace—Do you remember her telling us just before the boat pushed off that she had a *feel* we should not meet again?—that Marion's *wraith* was in the mist?—Walter I wish I did not feel so happy. Granny's superstitions come before me—'the seaman trembles when the bright, bright scud drifts through the cloudy sky,' she used to say."

"Helen," I gasped: it is too much: my head—my head!"

I dragged myself towards the door ; she flew to support me, chiding herself for inadvertence—Fielding had cautioned her : but it was such a trial to restrain her joy before our aunt ; she would talk of other matters if she could ; she would read to me ; she would do any thing if I would not wear that cold, melancholy look. I tried to evade her searching eye ; she snatched my hand from my forehead—"Walter, there is something dreadful, there is—You *have* quarrelled with Lord Sanford ?"

"Indeed, no," said I,—"'tis nothing new—it is—it is nothing at all Helen, nothing at all."—Heaven forgive the falsehood !—she had clung to me so piteously !

Katy entered with lights ; she arranged the table, looked at us both, and shook her head. Without a word being said, she stirred the fire and handed me a book—a novel circumstance, for Katy was not fond of books. She took a tray from Mrs. Green, poured out tea, trimmed the candles, gave us another pitying look, and left us.

Helen began to speak of trivial matters. I

grew more composed. She took the volume (it was Polybius,) and entered at once upon the Punic wars. Books and the evening tale had once been my mind's resting-places—but now!—Still I was glad she read, for I could ponder, I could arraign myself—how sharply!—Reflection brought with it the fact that by my weak procrastination I had exposed her to a test too harsh, perhaps, for woman's fortitude; clinging to a futile hope I had kept back a disclosure which had it been promptly made to Fielding, Helen had been preserved—until this evening I had not suspected the full force of that sensibility repressed by her extraordinary self-command. Her feelings were as keen as Marion's, and I was about to torture every fibre, to efface the glowing picture she had sketched, and substitute a canvass dark with hurricane and thunder-cloud!—I must do this or burden my poor, sick uncle with the terrible disclosure. "It must come," I exclaimed; "Helen, it must come!"

She laid down the book and viewed me earnestly—"You are feverish, you must sleep—

you must promise to sleep if you wish *me* to sleep." She led me from the room with that affectionate force which is resistless.

I obeyed her—Yes, she should sleep—that night at least she should sleep with the visions of the blessed—I feigned drowsiness when she entered my room—she left me with a fond 'good night,' and I felt the gloom of death fall on me!

Oh, how I struggled through that dreadful night! morning broke, and still I quailed at the mere thought of burdening Helen with my fatal secret—I would again revolve every method of escape—one hitherto unthought of suddenly occurred, a painful one, but comparatively with others it appeared consoling. I would throw myself upon the generosity of Fielding; I would confess the culpable weakness which had prevented a timely disclosure; he would keep the secret from Helen; he would tell her that an unlooked for obstacle had intervened.—But would it be just to test human virtue thus, to ask my noble friend to wear the semblance of a capricious, heartless waverer? Could Fielding consent to place himself in this degraded light? and if he could, how would he

look upon the coward who had forced him into so cruel a position?

I was tolerably successful in feigning cheerfulness when I met Helen at breakfast—She seemed determined to consider the exciting subject of the previous evening as interdicted for a period; but there was a spirit, a tone of exhilaration in all she said which manifested her complete security—She recalled to me a picture, Fielding had once shewn me, of a child busily stringing a chain of flowers while a glaring snake reared its angry crest from the flower-bed.

A message from the prison had somewhat reassured us—my uncle hoped he would be well enough to see us after noon—Helen suggested visiting Quinilla in the interval—"For aunt's sake we should overlook her petulance, and Mrs. Bullock has been so friendly."

This remark revived my yesterday's adventure; the present crisis was so fearful that I could not think upon resources for the future, however necessary; but as a reason for my avoiding this second visit I briefly imparted the arrangements I had made with our good-tampered acquaint-

ance—Helen listened with attention, and observed that we must remain in a dilemma for a short time, as we could not prematurely declare the cause of my withdrawing from my tutorship, concluding thus—“Quinilla has some good traits you must acknowledge Walter; she thought more of us than you suspected; 'tis a pity that she is so irritable.”

“And so domineering and conceited,” I rejoined, “and so insolent to Marion.”

“Marion always retorts most provokingly, you recollect,” said Helen.

“Master Walter, Master Walter, just look out o’ the window Sir!” Slauveen rushed into the room—“Look at Lanty Maw driving the green elegant bran-new jaunting car, and Master Dionysius with the yellow cushions—hurry Sir—Lanty looks uncommon well!”—Slauveen had put off his reserve with his powder and silk stockings—For the first time in my life I was glad to hear Quinilla’s voice.

“Come for me in half an hour Dionysius—we’ll take an airing round the ring.”

“’Tis the wedding ring she’s drivin’ for,” said Slauveen; “but she’s like dust drivin’

every where!—Down she jumps—off the car—up the stairs, three at a stride—She's in full swing Miss Helen—if she catches me 'twill ruin her good-humour"—He shot behind the door: our cousin entered with a flourish—Slauveen slid behind her back, and exit.

"So Helen, so Watty, I thought my *Lord* and *Lady* would leave you in the lurch; I'll lay you what you like he's an impostor!—well for you, you had a friend in the corner; I can do any thing with the Bullocks why! Mrs. B. praised you to the skies Watty; she calls you downright handsome—I wonder where she found your beauty: you were always thought so shocking plain!—I don't look blouzy, do I Helen?—Monimia too declares you have sweet eyes—Monimia is a fortune I can tell you—if you mind your hits—who knows!—We had a party last night—no cards; a concert—I wore my amber jacket—such music! two phil-harmonics!—and my bugle petticoat—one brought his flute, the other something like a great big fiddle; it might be a bassoon—Monimia sang '*Spirits* of my sainted Sire & she played Mozart too, a new march or something that way—

They may invite you to a party Helen; if I were you I wouldn't go; dress is so expensive—Just put a pin in my pad—am I spattered?"

Time was when her pell-mell gabble would have worried me, but now it was a relief; it brought me from distracting ruminations on the trials to which noble minds are subjected, into collision with every day people. Our cousin, recommenced her sputtering cantabile. "I'm in such spirits Helen!—quite a conquest Mrs. Bullock says—you must keep it a dead secret for—Who's this I wonder?—there's a rap!—are you at home?—Somebody is coming up-stairs; shall I peep:—'tis a lady in an elegant pelisse and quite a London hat."

Marion entered; she nodded carelessly at our cousin, whose visage became streaked with purple.

"Did you come alone?" said Helen, viewing her sister with delight.

"Alone?—no; but Lord Sanford heard that you were not alone, so he left me."

"His absence is good company," exclaimed Quinilla, tossing her head.

Marion took no other notice of this exquisite

remark than by turning more directly to her sister—"We have been furnishing our castle, Helen: the state-rooms shall be wainscotted with oak, and fitted up in your old legendary style. Sanford has some drawings of antique chairs and couches, with carvings of curious monsters—Walter will adore them! The grand saloon is to be hung with crimson damask, the library with crimson velvet—then there are mirrors, marbles, and candelabra. How delicious it will be to listen to your legends through the long winter evenings in a *real* castle Helen!—Yet I know that I shall always like the cottage best."

Quinilla honored this effusion sometimes with a gosling stare, sometimes with a forced titter, indicative of scornful incredulity; but I could perceive, by the tint of her complexion, an ominous drawing in of her lips, and a drumming with her fingers, that the virus was at work. The elegant pelisse, the London hat, the furniture, had swallowed her good humour inch by inch, and left her in a blaze of rancour. When Marion ceased she laughed contemptuously—In *her* opinion her *Ladyship* before she

built a castle should build an hospital to hold her poor relations.

"Are you so poor then Miss O'Toole?" said Marion.

The rebuff had awful consequences—"Audacious minx!—upstart! the ditto of her impertinent, imposter husband!"—A torrent of abusive epithets descended upon Marion, who, in her old playfully provoking manner, by cool retorts set our cousin's blood in typhus ferment.

"I wonder you will class yourself with upstarts Miss O'Toole: you call yourself our cousin through mere courtesy: we are not related. Lord Sanford says that, in consideration of your age, you should rather call yourself our aunt."

Marion had sown mischief and she reaped it. Some stronger epithet than furious must be invented to typify Quinilla's state of mind. She glared around, as if adjuring the walls to witness this surpassing insult. I felt a presentiment of evil, but I could not turn aside the whirlwind. Quinilla's throat became compressed; hoarse, disjointed sentences were gurgled forth—"Pauper—outcast—brought up on cha-

rity—aunt—age—lord—humbug—*lady*—cousin—pay for it—”

At last she became choked ; she sat down, took breath, and seemed to collect herself for some decisive blow—“ *You*,” she resumed, “ *you* to dare insult a girl of my consequence ! What *are* you all ?—Beggars the whole *tote* of you but for my wise sister !—Aye, you may laugh, *my lady* : they have a right to sneer whose father was as good as hanged and whose mother died in a mad-house !”

Her auditors were mute ; she proceeded with the vulgar bitterness of wounded self-conceit—“ Why don’t you laugh now ?—Your mother ! aye and all *her* mother’s family root and branch died mad—cousin by courtesy am I !—certainly I claim relationship with a superior stock !—a pack of lack-witted grandees !—No wonder you look down on the O’Tooles—didn’t your mother’s father leave his daughter to a convent ?—what was that for ?—they were wise men, very wise, who married her and you !”

“ The jaunting-car is at the door ma’am,” said Mrs. Green, entering and curtsying to Quinilla.

"Oh! Mrs. Green, I'll go immediately;—thank you Mrs. Green; it's well in my way indeed to put myself into a passion, and to plague myself to death for such a set!"

"Detestable creature!" exclaimed Marion, looking after her with that wild eye-flash which once before had made me quiver. "If I had believed a syllable of her horrid story I should have fallen dead! but I know her vindictive spirit, I know her falsehood—Our mother!—my husband an impostor!—'Tis all alike; all the fabrication of her wicked brain!—You remember Walter her stories of Lord Sanford?—our mother!—false creature!—What a tale it was to forge—in one instant too!—oh I do so hate her!"

"Marion!" The beseeching agony of this ejaculation went to my inmost soul.

"There, there," said Marion, embracing her sister; "there Helen, I will not say another word of her—Look at me Helen; look at me; indeed I wo'n't—Take away that handkerchief: if she trample me I will not say I hate her any more; let me only see your face Helen."

"She is terrified," said I; "this violence is

too much for her." I was leading Helen from the room when Lord Sanford's carriage was announced.

"Wo'n't you say one word Helen?—wo'n't you say one word before I go?"

"God bless you!" faltered Helen.

"May I stay with you a little longer?—*May* I stay Walter?"

"No, no," said I,

"Then I will come this evening certainly; there will be no danger of meeting with that hateful creature."

CHAPTER XVII.

"A perfect woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort, to command;
And yet a spirit still and bright,
With something of an angel light."

HELEN stood motionless, her face still covered, until the carriage drove away; she removed the handkerchief, "you are dying Helen," I exclaimed;—she was so deadly pale that I feared to leave her for assistance;—"Oh Helen forgive me."

"It is true then—and you knew it?"

I groaned.

"Is it all true—all!—Well, well, 'tis very well; my head is giddy; let me sit down:—

Walter,"—she looked in my face with an expression of calm, cureless anguish :—" Walter my heart is broken."

" Oh Helen, Helen," I exclaimed, " will you kill me?"

She fell upon her knees, burying her face in the sofa-cushion ; after some moments she arose and looked at me intently ; her countenance gradually assumed an air of stern sorrow.

" Why were you silent brother ? you might well have looked heart-stricken, did you intend ?—you could not intend to deceive—"

" Helen !—deceive ! recollect my struggles of last night : they were not the struggles of a villain. I ought to have spoken sooner : I ought to have prevented my poor friend's declaration : I meant to keep *you* in ignorance, and to disclose every thing to Fielding this very day."

" Would that have been generous think you ;" exclaimed Helen ; " to burden him *alone* ; I thank Heaven, I *do* thank Heaven for the accident by which he has escaped ! it would have been a fatal error ! Feel no remorse Walter : I am grateful to you for my little hour of hap-

piness—such happiness ! Our best friends are spared brother : I could not have hid my joy to day : I must have told my poor aunt something.”

“She will discover that something terrible has happened,” said I ; “ your face is death-like.”

“ She shall not ;—rely on me that she shall not.—Sit here Walter, sit close to me, and tell me the ‘ every thing’ you would have told.”—Tears and sobs burst forth at last ; but tears cut not to the heart so keenly as the dried up eye ; the chill, hopeless look.

“ Now Walter,” resumed Helen, “ now you may begin.”

I collected myself and briefly imparted the record I had woven, from mutilated indexes, of my mother’s story ; touching lightly on my last interview with Madame Wallenberg, the circumstances of which were in themselves a sufficient evidence of our relationship to her, and of the invariable recurrence of that hereditary affliction in my mother’s family which justified those censures the Baroness had passed upon herself for consenting to the marriage of her niece ; I described my horror when the

mystery was suddenly developed by Marion's derangement, and finally I recounted the sequel of Julia Derentai's story which my aunt, unwittingly, had revealed on the day of Lord Sanford's dismissal.

"There is not an opening for doubt," said Helen, sighing heavily, "I now understand my aunt's resolute rejection of Lord Sanford; the inconsistencies and ambiguous expressions of Madame Wallenberg also are explained. I, too, Walter, used to meditate and wonder; there was something enigmatical I saw, but this awful solution was as remote from my thoughts as that the joy of yesterday would flit away so soon." She shuddered;—"Our father's fate I considered a sufficient cause for my uncle's giving up the world, and the rank which was his birth-right; as that fate however had been the consequence of errors originating in mistaken judgment, it had added no sense of degradation to my grief for our family misfortunes: but my mother! innocent, yet branding her unhappy offspring!"—Helen again burst into a passion of tears: still, her sense of humiliation seemed soothed as she expatiated on

the virtues which my aunt's simple eloquence had so feelingly extolled. It seemed as if she would blot out the unmerited stigma with the tears which the record of her mother's blameless life and sufferings drew forth.

"My mother like Marion might have been ignorant of this fatal inheritance," resumed Helen; "poor Marion! thank God she had not our responsibility! thank God!"

Helen seldom broke into ejaculation, never called upon that name she now so fervently apostrophized without a prostration of every feeling to the veneration which inspired her address; a celestial calm seemed breathed into her soul, a pure and bright elation at being called on to fulfil a heavenly fiat—"Do you remember Walter," she continued, "that singular conversation in the study? do you remember my aunt's remark upon the law which parted the leper from his fellow creatures?"

"I remember it well," I replied, "even then I had a glimmering idea that we were of the cast-aways she alluded to."

"We are cast-aways Walter, but we are not criminal: the spring-time of our mortality is

gone; we have no *home* here, but we have solemn duties to perform for those who have watched over us for many years with anxiety and trembling: to day we may indulge in tears, but to-morrow we must turn us to labour without bitterness of heart, and fix our hopes upon that *home* where the lost and darkened intellect shall be restored." She paused—I could not reply—"We must be resolute, Walter, for I have learned that employment may ward off—let us not speak of it, let us not think of it—from this day let us never wring each other's hearts by complaint; we will not bow down those who have fostered us—gay thoughts, bright hopes, are gone; but we may, we *shall* acquire that serenity which leads to an eternal peace."

I looked at her with wonder; the kindred spirit of Madame Wallenberg was discernible in the noble confidence of her young relative—But alas for human fortitude! a breath upset poor Helen's, a voice was heard; a light impatient step—"Tis Fielding!" said Helen, "must I see him?—I can not—tell him—*will* you tell him?"—She was darting from the room when Field-

ing entered—"Helen!" The muscles of her face trembled with agony:—"Helen!" repeated Fielding.

Her agitation encreased; she leaned against me; Fielding approached. She held out her hand and tried to smile; her agony became the more apparent.

"Your uncle—Lady Sanford?" stammered Fielding, retaining Helen's hand.

"They are well," said I, "Marion has been here; have you seen her? have you seen my uncle?"

"Walter you try me cruelly," said Fielding; "Helen will not keep me in suspense! my own Helen will not torture me." The intense affection which his looks and words betrayed, did not contribute to remove my perturbation.

"Were I not convinced that you are mine," continued Fielding, "I could not so patiently endure this silence Helen—but secure of that—quite secure—"

The low, tearless, sob which burst from my poor sister, and Fielding's abrupt recoil, completed the triumph of my weakness. I placed

Helen on the sofa, sat down near her and wept to keep my heart from bursting.

"You have sufficiently prepared me," said Fielding, gravely addressing himself to me;—"be explicit now—a word will satisfy—is my contract with your sister broken?"

"It is."

Fielding staggered back. "Is it broken with her consent?"

"Yes."

He seemed to collect himself, and said deliberately; "She was then mistaken in the nature of her sentiments for me?"

"No, Mr. Fielding, no," said Helen, rising and approaching him; "I was not mistaken *there*; but I thought I could go through this interview with firmness; I thought my love for you, my deep unalterable affection would support me: I would have hid my anguish, indeed I would, if I had had a little time for preparation—I did not think you would be here so soon—that I should be forced to tell you so immediately—that—we must see each other no more."

Fielding's face became as bloodless as her own—" 'Tis some romantic scruple—I can remove it—your uncle—has he interfered? has Walter?" He looked at me sternly.

"Oh do not blame Walter," said Helen, with reviving energy, "his secret was dearly kept—my uncle has *not* interfered—he knows nothing—he must know nothing—One moment—give me a moment;"—she pressed her forehead—The pause was awful—"Mr. Fielding you remember the night Lord Sanford was despaired of—you remember my drawing you from his chamber and leading you to Marion's."

Helen's color came and went so swiftly that to save her from falling I stood near her. Fielding seemed unable to support himself; he sat down and appeared lost to every thing but Helen's voice—she continued—

"I led you to my sister's chamber—what did you behold? a human being bereft of reason—distorted features—imbecile fury—what did you hear? reviling! the jabber of the idiot! A few hours before and that abject creature was as perfect in intellect as I am now—and I!—I may be stricken in a moment as she was

then—as our mother was—our mother's mother! there was insanity in her family, and its effects have been hitherto awful and invariable.”

Fielding's countenance seemed too rigidly fixed to express emotion; he made no exclamation, but continued gazing at my sister with the earnest, cold monotony of features beaming from tapestry or canvass. Helen proceeded.

“Until this hour I was ignorant of our calamitous descent; none of us but Walter had penetrated the secret; it was veiled from us, no doubt with the most benevolent intention—Do not think that I relinquish my engagement because—”

“Relinquish!” echoed Fielding, “did you say relinquish?”

In an instant he was roused from torpor to passionate emotion—“Is it for my sake, Helen that you relinquish your engagement?” She made no reply.

“Had we been married you could not have cancelled it,” said Fielding, “and we were bound to each other before either of us was aware of this—”

“Interdict,” added Helen firmly. Fielding started.

“ You yourself have passed judgment on the neglectors of such intelligible warnings,” said I, advancing to Helen’s relief; “ you have reprobated the selfishness which extends and prolongs so stern a visitation ; you forget that, since I became aware of Marion’s derangement, you and I have made the counteraction of this malady the subject of many discussions.”—

“ And you forget,” said Fielding, “ that I assured you it may be mitigated—subdued—even when inherent it may not be so constant in recurrence ; time may blunt its malignity—may eradicate it.”

“ Mr. Fielding,” said Helen, “ be yourself ; the shock of this discovery unsettles the fortitude of both of us. I am recovering mine ; the time will come when you will wonder you opposed me. It may please Heaven to interpose its mercy ; I do not despair : but could you be happy with such a calamity impending ?—recall that night !—Would you live with the palsyng fear of beholding your wife a maniac ! would your affection be proof against the vacant glare ? the laugh of frenzy—”

“ It would,” interrupted Fielding ; “ under

the most revolting aspect I would watch over you Helen ; I would remember the heroism of this moment, I would adore you in any—”

“ Hush, hush !” said Helen ; “ you could not, you could not.”—

“ What ! doubt the steadiness of my attachment !” She looked at him reproachfully.

“ Hear me, Helen ; the knowledge of your being liable to such a calamity, with the apprehension of your being subjected to brutality or ignorance, make the prospect of our separation more terrible to me than any fear of the evils you so coolly prophesy. I have studied the various aspects of insanity—shocked by the frightful abuses I discovered in its treatment—and I have often been successful in subduing it ; you sacrifice yourself and Walter to an over-excited sentiment of generosity. Are you justified in rejecting the means accorded you in peril ? and to what end ? to make him you would preserve supremely wretched.”

Helen seemed to waver ; she cast at me a glance of mingled terror and uncertainty. Fielding observed her as if his life hung on her decision, while faint and trembling she regard-

ed us alternately with an expression of the deepest tenderness; the issue hovered on a breath. Suddenly she seemed animated by some new thought—"Oh Mr. Fielding," she exclaimed, "you were noble and magnanimous till now; why will you persuade me to act against the principles you have advocated? it is you that are governed by over-excited feelings.—You have told me that nothing more than terror unsettles the intellect—solitary—or with my poor Walter, I can labor on patiently; the duties imposed by gratitude and affection will contribute to deaden the sense of our misfortune; we shall not be wretched while we see my dear aunt and uncle made comfortable by our exertions; employment, you have said, in cases of mental disturbance, is salutary, and we shall fly to it as a balm and a blessing; but were I your wife *fearfulness and shuddering* would fasten on me—my self-reverence gone—an object of perpetual and health-destroying watchfulness to the person I love far beyond myself—mistaking perhaps the perturbations of remorse for the noiseless step of an insidious disease."

“Reverse our positions,” cried Fielding, impetuously interrupting her, “let *me* be the denounced ! how would you act ?”

“I hope I should act as you will,” said Helen after a pause ; “I hope I should : but if I could not—is my weakness an excuse for yours ?”

“Helen, Helen ! you are too collected,” exclaimed Fielding, “let us part—it costs you nothing.”

“Only my earthly hopes,” said Helen, “and they are—nothing !” She turned her head away and said in a tremulous tone—“Alas ! if mothers visited as my poor mother was, could foresee the trials their children might be doomed to, how bitter would be their self-reproach ?”

These words had an electrical effect on Fielding. A rush of hitherto unthought of influences seemed all at once to master him : he leaned upon the table and buried his face in his hands : after a few moments he raised his head and said impressively, “Helen you have not answered me ; do you relinquish your engagement for my sake ?”

"For your sake," said Helen,—“and for—your father’s.”

“But if my father still consent?”

“There may be others,” said Helen in broken accents, “whose consent you cannot ask:” she drew a letter from her bosom; “last night I read this letter many times; I pondered upon every line; I believed that I might prove the daughter your father wished for: I proposed to myself a lofty standard and I resolved to reach it—*can I?*” She unfolded the letter and read—“*Your mother was a poor gentlewoman, but she bequeathed more riches to her son, than all the wealth of both the Indies.*” She held the letter towards Fielding, and almost convulsed with grief continued to address him—“What should *I* bequeath? There are other passages as clear—but I have not voice to read them now—take back your father’s letter; I cannot be his daughter, but I will love you both as well, as wife and daughter ever loved a husband and a father!” She was leaving the room; Fielding started forward and caught her hand—“Forgive me Helen! it is all over: you will hear of me in the asylums of misery—farewell!”

He dropped her hand and she glided from the room.

Fielding stood like one entranced looking after her: I had been so utterly uncertain of the issue of this conference that I, too, gazed after Helen, almost expecting her return. The deep sighs of my unhappy friend aroused me: I drew near him—"Walter my poor Walter" he ejaculated; tears started to his eyes; "my poor Walter, I blamed you for many things: your conduct is vindicated now."

"You will not forsake us Fielding," said I, "you will write to us."

"Forsake you! it will be very difficult for me to place that distance between us which must make letters our only mode of intercourse—but I owe it to *her*: write unreservedly Walter: be explicit and minute."

"And you," said I, "you will return to us if"—I could not give utterance to the dreadful contingency that hung upon the *if*—

"Beware of such dangerous allusions," said Fielding—"support her—she will support you—I have prevailed upon Lord Sanford to return to the glen: I too hoped"—his voice faltered—

"I must break this event to my father in person—it will be keenly felt—for—*her* place will never be supplied."

He pressed my hand as if unable to tear himself away.

"You will take leave at the prison," said I, "how they will regret you Fielding! my poor aunt!"

"Kind, upright soul!" he ejaculated; "no one is above her in my esteem." He approached the door and again stopped irresolute;—"No—I will not ask it—but tell her Walter that I shall love her with the love she merits."

He left me—I never felt a drearier blank! a keener heart-ache!

CHAPTER XVIII.

" O! grief can give the blight of years,
The stony impress of the dead—
We looked farewell through blighting tears,
And then hope fled!"

A SUMMONS from the prison found me still standing where my regretted friend had left me. I stole to Helen's door and listened; there was no breathing of complaint; I determined to leave her undisturbed.

The prison Mercury, Neddy's little curly-pated heir, awaited me; I envied the boy's riotous light-heartedness as he ran before me, diverging occasionally to dash his naked feet into every puddle he espied, in the very

wantonness of fun. The wind which bandied to and fro the corduroy strips that barely did the duty of a nether garment, was not more volant than his limbs, and yet he contrived never to exceed a certain distance in advance ; looking back at intervals to assure himself of my proximity. The urchin was so taking and so comical that I could not find it in my heart to rebuke him, or repress the laugh which shewed every pearl of his mouth whenever the passengers would jump aside to avoid the splashings he inflicted. At last he caught a pig as reckless as himself, and, with practised aim, sent it right between the legs of a prodigious dandy, who, in a sort of dancing gait, was making up to me : the upset was deplorable—the boy roared with a sympathy-compelling glee, tears bubbling down his rosy cheeks, while the pig kept squealing, the dandy kicking, and I kept rubbing with my pocket handkerchief a pair of bright green pantaloons—exquisitely braided, and pouring forth apologies, indiscreet, because they revealed my connexion with the impish pig-decoyer. I had recognised the younger Dionysius (Dionysius was a patrony-

mic of the Bullock family.) " 'Tis of no consequence at all at all," cried he good-humoredly; " don't distress yourself; *you* couldn't *help* the pig sure."

" Help the pig to throw you down !" said I, somewhat indignant ; " not I, indeed."

At this the imp laughed until his breath failed, and, springing on the pig which he had held in clutch, they set off helter-skelter, howling and hurrooing and overthrowing all they met.

" Do you know Monimia was served just such another trick on the South-mall one day," said Dionysius ; " tumbled in a flash of lightning—a sow *skelped* through her petticoats !—there should be some law against these pigs Sir. But I was going with a message to you Mr. Fitzgerald ; will you all drink tea with us this evening ? my mother hopes you're disengaged ; so do I, I'm sure."

I made excuses ; my sister was not well : my aunt seldom left the prison.

" I'm very sorry for it 'pon my honor an' word I am," said Dionysius, warmly ; " we asked Mr. Fielding and Lord and Lady Sanford

just o' purpose; you'll come another time though; may I call upon your sister Mr. Fitzgerald?"

"Not at present," said I, eagerly, "not to-day."

"Oh any day will do; my mother says that you and she are *good* enough to teach us."

His emphasis was so peculiar that I hardly could determine what meaning he attached to "*good* enough to teach us," so I wished him a good morning with an embarrassed air.

He seized my hand and shook it lovingly; "You had better begin soon though; my brain is growing deuced stiff; but I know I'll like to learn from you, for Miss O'Toole says you're so easy. Good bye—but can't you come to us to-morrow why?—do."

I assented, and walked on with a heavy heart; it seemed as if I possessed no sympathies in common with the people I was destined to live amongst: they were kind, nay friendly, but I felt they never could become to me what Fielding was, and that I must plod on wearily, yoked to unsuitable companions. My actual position had not changed since yesterday, but

the *animus* 'that led me along so light' had vanished: thoughts which the day before were traced with sun-beams, now were shadowed by eclipse; the dull sky, and humid atmosphere oppressed me.

I passed under the gloomy arch; the prison door opened and closed upon me: I followed Nabbs up stairs; he kept *wondering to the world* what had become of little Phil; Phil had never been called lazy-leg from the hour he had a leg.

I tried to force my looks to cheerfulness, but the scene I entered on absolved me from this constraint. My uncle lay half extended on the bed; Marion sat near him, fondling his wasted hand, and weeping bitterly; Lord Sanford, holding an open letter, was walking up and down the room, looking very grave; my aunt sat at the bed-foot, her face as grief-stricken as her husband's.

"Oh Walter pity me," cried Marion, "I am going away! I am going away this very moment."

The intelligence, and the burst of grief that followed it deprived me of power to reply.

"My brother is dangerously ill," said Sanford, "I must set off instantly: this letter from Lady Dellival is most pressing: indeed it is peremptory; he is my only brother Marion, you would not wish me to defer—"

"No, no, no," sobbed Marion, "I'll go at once if I don't die at once."

"My dear Marion," said Lord Sanford, "you are going with your husband."

"I know I ought not to feel as if my heart was shivered," replied Marion, with still more passionate emotion; "I know aunt loves her husband above all the world, but she loves *us* too: if I love you *best*, Lord Sanford, it is no harm surely, to love others also, and if it be a fault I cannot help it." She threw herself beside my uncle—"To leave him in this dismal prison too," she added, wringing her hands; "look at him, he is not like my uncle; look at his poor sunken eyes; his hair was brown a little while ago—take him from this place Lord Sanford, take him from this place, and I'll never say I care for him, or any one but you, whatever I may feel."

She fell upon her knees grasping her hus-

band's hands and looking up to him with the most earnest expression of entreaty.

"My sweet Marion," said Lord Sanford, trying to raise her.

"No," said Marion, "I will not move until you promise; *will* you promise? *will* you."

"Come hither Marion," said my uncle.

"*Will* you take him from this place Lord Sanford? I want no castle, only pay that man."

"You forget that we return soon my love; in a month, or—less; in that time every thing will be arranged. Mr. Fitzgerald understands."

"Yes Lord Sanford," said my uncle, slowly turning towards him. "I understand you perfectly; and you Sir, understand me, I hope as perfectly: we need not discuss points fully comprehended—You are the husband of our child, by your own will and act—not ours—but treat her tenderly, remember she was the darling of many hearts; protect her as you ought, and may God bless you!"

"And forgive you too!" rejoined my aunt, "and remember Sir," she added, trying to speak calmly, "remember you stole her from those who did not prize her for her beauty—If it be

the will of Heaven to rob her of the charms you love her for, bring her back to us; promise to do that—it is the only favor we would deign to ask you.”

Marion rose abruptly; she fixed her eyes upon her husband, the look was keen and troubled. “You pledged a solemn promise when I married you, Lord Sanford, to release my uncle—if I thought”—She sank upon the bed-side and gasped for breath.

“My dear, sweet, Marion,” said Lord Sanford, “you are too excitable! leave all these matters for the present—you will be ill my love.”

“I *am* ill,” cried Marion, “my head is hurt.”

We surrounded her, filled with consternation.

“Your uncle will be as he used to be, please God! when you come back darling,” said my aunt, trembling from head to foot.

“It will make me young again to see our Marion,” said my uncle, stilling the tremor of her fingers with his nerveless hand.

“Come Marion,” said I, “you wished to see Helen? will you see her now?”

“Bring her here,” said Marion, eagerly,

"bring her at once ; you cheat me, Helen tells the truth."

The door opened at the moment and Fielding entered ; a glance at Marion was sufficient to explain the cause of our perturbation.

"Lady Sanford," he exclaimed, taking her hand, "let me wish you joy ! I told you yesterday we were getting on at last—to day I have still better news—Your uncle is at liberty."

"It is not true Sir," said Marion.

"Here is the bond," said Fielding, presenting a paper to Lord Sanford—"your carriage waits—it shall convey your uncle home this very moment if you wish it."

"Then you have not deceived me after all," said Marion, throwing her arms around her husband's neck ; she sobbed hysterically, beseeching him to forgive her, and protesting she would go with him the minute, the very minute she saw her uncle outside that den.

My aunt cast a bewildered look at Fielding ; a ray of exalted satisfaction brightened his countenance.

"Now then," said Marion, seizing her uncle's hand, "we are ready—make haste—that intolerable delay is over."

erable weight is pressing on my forehead—this place is suffocating—come.”—My uncle drew back irresolute.

“The air is keen,” said Fielding; “you are an invalid, Sir; assist me, Walter.” We wrapped the cloak around him which my aunt hastily presented, and Fielding whispered, “I do not exaggerate the danger, Sir, she *must* be gratified or—”

“How you loiter!” said Marion, “come;” she drew my uncle’s arm within her own, hastening to the door; we followed.

Nabbs stood at the stair-head, patting the vagrant pig-bestrider; he pulled his forelock to salute the ‘masther,’—“I never thought my hospitable father’s son would be happy to turn out a gentleman your honor, and wish him never to darken his Hotel again; what changes come to people of our rank your honor! Phil, my prince, run down an’ tell your royal mother the quality are takin’ leave of our dominion—she’ll be sorry enough, whatever I may be, to lose her visitors; Misthiss Nabbs knows *rale* coppers from *raps* upon my credit.”

Mrs. Nabbs, however, was too backward in

her devoirs to suit Marion's impatience: Phil scraped his little foot, and held the door as wide as it would go, nodding to Fielding as if they were on terms of easy friendship; we helped my uncle into the carriage; Marion, dragging my aunt with her, was in a moment at his side; Sanford leaped upon the box, and I found myself arm in arm with Fielding, walking towards Mrs. Green's, internally questioning the reality of this event.

To thank such a man as Fielding was impossible; I pressed his arm—my heart was overflowing. We proceeded silently, until a forced cough drew our notice to little Phil, who was pattering behind us. "The prisoner boys be askin' to bid you a good bye," whimpered the child, looking up at Fielding ruefully; "they say you'll never come again; Dad says so too, but I say you will though; won't you now?"

"Yes."

"But when, I want to know; to-morrow it it?"

"To-day, go back and say so."

This little incident broke the spell which had kept us mute; Fielding enquired into the cause

of Marion's alarming excitement. I described the prison scene, dwelling sorrowfully on the urgent necessity for Lord Sanford's departure.

"Necessity!" said Fielding, in a tone of indignant doubt—"Alas! there is no point of upright principle by which one may lay hold of him! conscience cannot strike through the barrier of self-love—such a man will promise and unpromise in a breath."

Just then we reached our lodging; the door was open and Sanford's carriage waiting: we stopped, as by a mutual impulse, at the stair-foot—I figured to myself the scene now passing, "Tis Helen's voice," said I.

"Make my adieus to my good old friends, Walter," said Fielding, "I cannot—it would unman me—Heaven bless you!"

He hurried away, for Lord Sanford was now descending the stairs with Marion; she rushed to me, but as suddenly drew back, giving her hand to her husband; "I have *promised* to go Walter, I will keep *my* promise too; kiss me my dear brother—kiss me; think of me, tell them all to think of me—bid Grace good bye for me—and poor blind Johnny—and the little ones—

when you sit beneath the alder-trees, Walter you'll talk of me—"

"My dear Marion," interrupted Lord Sanford, "why so solemn? you shall return my love."

"*Shall I?*" said Marion, with a mournful pathos no time can blot from my remembrance; Lord Sanford looked impatient; he unlocked my hand from hers—the carriage drove off rapidly.

END OF VOL II.

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THE INTERDICT.



VOL. III.

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THE INTERDICT ;

A NOVEL

" Do thou, my soul, the destin'd period wait,
When God shall solve the dark decrees of fate ;
His now unequal dispensations clear,
And make all wise and beautiful appear. "

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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THE INTERDICT.

CHAPTER I.

"To converse with a person of mean understanding is as difficult as to travel on foot with a lame man."

For some weeks after this eventful day my diary was ill kept. I could not retouch my sketches as I used to do ; the gap in my portrait gallery was so heart-rending ! it seemed necessary to blot out old impressions and to chain my faculties to the tug and strain of barren speculation, and employment as barren.

The office I had so joyfully accepted as a

succedaneum for that of shop-man, I found to be one involving more drudgery than I had, in my dreariest apprehensions, attached to the duties of a dealer. I had commenced my labours gallantly, deriving courage from Helen's example, but in none of the toils of Hercules can I find an apt parallel for my surpassing travail. To clear the head of a Dionysius Bullock would have posed the most consummate hero or philosopher of heathenland, or any other land: the force of a mere stream, applied discreetly, might carry off a wall of matter vast as the Augean heap; but what amount of force could clarify a mind so stolid as my pupil's? I drudged on undismayed for weeks, simplifying, exemplifying, without effect; I could as soon have taught him argument as rudiment, the abstrusest theory as the simplest element; neither I nor Socrates could have shaped him into any thing but a good-natured, drawing, inoffensive dunce.

Monimia was as wearisome, but from a contrary cause; *he* had too few ideas, *she* too many; at least too many 'airy nothings' which stood for ideas; but these not being properly

coerced, were eternally rioting, squabbling, and flitting through her brain in hazy confusion. She was a fine, shewy girl, with very red arms and very red cheeks, the latter dimpled by an incessant giggle which displayed rows of large white teeth; she was conceited and rather dictatorial, yet endowed with a fair portion of the family good-nature; the sum total of her accomplishments was prodigious; she had a smattering of every thing, even of trigonometry. Her mother pronounced her a *rara avis*, and the general voice of her acquaintance confirmed this opinion; but, like many other rare birds, her notes were less pleasant than her plumage; they were pitched to the O'Toole ascendancy, and predominated too much in the establishment. Her genius also was never in the back-ground; indeed, it could not be repressed, her mother said—"true talent *will* break out;"—it broke on me like a tornado, sweeping off the leisure hours I had predestined for communion with my dear old sages. In the attic apartment aptly assigned for the brother's initiation into attic mysteries, would the sister diurnally beset me with impor-

tunities to correct her verses, strung with remarkable independence of prosody; nay, many times while I was toiling to engraft declension on the memory of Dionysius, would Monimia interpolate between *bona*, *bonum*, her mutilated Iambics. Thus, between the dull bird and the rare bird, did I often sit exhausted of conception, staring from one genius to the other and wondering by what course of transmigration I had arrived there. But the crowning point of bewilderment was to behold the brother, planet-stricken at the sister's progress — "twas too bad, so it was, that while he was struggling to bring out *quod*, Monimia was making lines *as fast as hops*;" I am sure she made them faster much than I could hop. Thus was a really kind-hearted young lady spoiled by the illimitable range of her capacity.

Notwithstanding the *solid* advantages of my situation, I would have preferred to it hard labour at a mill, but for the fellowship of Helen, and the state of our finances, which made the liberal salary attached to the tuition of the Bullocks an object of vital consideration. My uncle had become acutely sensitive of his

obligation to Fielding; on every other point he was, as formerly—persuadable, indulgent, and forbearing; but on this he was impracticable. The idea had fastened on him that he had committed a fraud in becoming security for a sum beyond what he possessed, and no argument could divest him of this notion: he avowed that the solace of his prison hours had been found in his determining, that, whenever the law should set him free, he would work for the liquidation of a part at least of the sum due upon the bond; and now, should it please Heaven to restore his strength, he said, he would seek out some employment, and labour to defray it.—Could he do less for his philanthropic friend than for his less indulgent creditor?

It was in vain we represented Fielding's character and circumstances: he still insisted that the sum which had purchased his enlargement belonged to Fielding's heirs, and could not justly be transferred; he should consider it, simply, as a loan. Thus did this heretofore liberal and clear-minded man, in furtherance of views cherished beyond the extreme limit of

probability, hoard, parsimoniously, the scant savings of our joint earnings, and lament the protracted weakness that prevented his own contribution, heaping up fractions which, unless struck by a fairy-wand, could never swell to the coveted sum.

I believe that Helen, in secret, favored my uncle's sentiments, though her reason demonstrated the futility of his hope; perhaps she thought it soothing to his morbid sense of error that conscientiousness should seek its ends even by means on which the judgment might look coldly; or she made use of this consolatory hope to stimulate him to employ measures for his recovery.

Helen was faithful to her pledge; not even my aunt suspected the sources of that grief which gave her countenance the character of a marble bust; the pale face was perfectly serene; from the day of her sharp trial it seemed as if events no longer disturbed or surprised her; she went on gently in her course; silent, and attracting little notice, but never relaxing in exertion.

A great mind seldom breaks into that tu-

multuous sorrow which passes with the many for a sign of deep emotion ; observers less interested than myself could not have penetrated through Helen's placid seriousness to the workings of genuine feeling, or have inferred that her present mode of life was not her choice. I, indeed, could detect occasional sinkings of the mind, involuntary shudderings, which betrayed a deep-seated canker ; these perturbed indications however gradually decreased ; she saw that I observed her, and a faint smile would spread itself over her face to obliterate my gloom : her mind by a vigorous effort began to convert corroding events into stimulants to moral energy. This gentle creature, this almost child, was, in her purely christian confidence, a stoic more practically patient than was any self-dependent martyr of the sect. To soften their reverses to the objects of her early reverence became a paramount obligation : whether her hours were given to instruction, or spent in midnight vigils, or devoted to the simpler duties of nurse and lecturer, *their* comfort was her aim. Often when faint-heartedness would

creep on me, and I would find myself relapsing into my native indolence, or unstrung by the vexations incidental to my tutorship, Helen's example would revive my courage and my self-control.

Whether she possessed a peculiar talent for imparting knowledge, or that her pupil was less flighty at German than at the classics, certain it is that Helen's instruction produced more fruit than mine; in fact I became so doubtful of the benefit conferred by my tuition that, from remorse of conscience, I one day hinted to our patroness my inability for the office of preceptor.

"Inability!" echoed Mrs. Bullock, with a look of vehement astonishment, "inability! you must be joking why: I never saw any one so improved as Dionysius in all my life: just ask Miss McCarthy; ask Miss O'Toole; ask any body!—Give up indeed! you'll do no such thing: do you want to frighten me out of my six senses?—Why Monimia read me a bit of Cicero this morning! 'tis beautiful! a second Wellington! *is* he a Field-marshal? What a head he has!"

My scruples were unappeased : I stammered something of my pupil's incapacity.

"Pooh, pooh! we don't want you to do miracles ; Dionysius is no Cicero we know—but just look at Monimia !"

Still I demurred, wondering at my novel pertinacity.

"I tell you what," said Mrs. Bullock ; "if you say another word you'll be the death o' me—I'm very delicate—as to Mr. B. he'll be outrageous : he says you are worth a hundred weight of frog-eaters—there, there ; go to your *penetralia* as Monimia calls it ; I wish you could come and live with us entirely, and that angel upon earth that's going fast to Heaven I fear."

From sheer want of nerve I submitted, and again vigorously attacked the brain of Dionysius, but no battering-ram could reach what was not there.—Meantime Helen, by a tact I was not master of, was really working wonders ; she saw my powers were unequal to illuminate the upper story of my pupil, particularly while my efforts were obstructed by an adjoining nursery of little Bullocks, animals so riotous, unmanage-

able, and fierce, that I had not physical force to remonstrate with them ; they seemed created for no other purpose but to make a noise : whenever I was lucky enough (by the occurrence of some accidental pleasure-party) to get rid of the elder Bullocks, the bellowing of these young ones would begin.

I might have withdrawn to my chamber in our lodging, but Monimia had monopolized all my books, and I dared not subtract a single volume ; besides, Mr. Bullock often required my epistolary services during shop-hours, and I was the more scrupulous on this point, because in the scale of family ascendancy Mr. B. mostly stood at zero.

It appeared that few in the mansion possessed delicate sense of hearing ; habit had reconciled them to a hubbub : when I hinted that our studies were disturbed by the nursery diversions, Mrs. Bullock arched hereye-brows in amaze, appealing to her mate whether Diana, Livia, Julius, and Timotheus, were not the quietest things in Christendom. Monimia however was awakened to the turmoil ; she had a tongue and she used it ; but the remedy was

worse than the disease, so I bore without fresh murmur my Tantalus position, and the bellowing of the minor Bullocks.

Helen's lecture-room was not so proximate to the theatre of uproar, but she sympathized in my sense of the annoyance and also felt compassion for these ill-governed babes: they reminded her of her little mountain flock, of her sunny days in the old school-room, when "once upon a time" would transform the most riotous into models of attention; the apt tale inculcating some Christian precept would kindle sparks of congenial sentiment, and train the infant listeners to emulate the virtues of her puny heroines. She introduced herself into the nursery, one day, when the natives, worn out with whooping, were ambitious of some novelty to subserve the practice of their iron lungs; they thronged around her with a roar that made me tremble for her safety, persisting with ferocious obstinacy in retaining her their prisoner—But experience had taught Helen how to regulate the springs and wheels of natures more perverse: mental intricacies before unsolvable had been made intelligible by Fielding: she knew that

there were principles and sympathies to which she could, effectively, appeal ; the quiet dignity of her aspect awed the rude, and the sweetness of her address, so opposed to the wrath-exciting menaces of Monimia, arrested the violent : the grosser passions insensibly sank into abeyance ; slumbering impulses were awakened, her dominion in the nursery was imperceptibly established ; she became the self-elected monitress of these neglected children, and the qualms were removed which had afflicted me whenever I thought upon our ill-earned salary.

These young creatures soon illustrated the efficacy of that teaching which is preceded by the study of the subject to be taught ; their progress in acquirement was slow, because their capacities were limited ; but self-conceit was not fostered by applause, nor violence by menace. There was no straining to instruct them in that for which they were unsuited, they were not drilled into pert, precocious epitomes of universal knowledge ; they were submitted to no forcing-machinery of arts and sciences made easy, which, properly interpreted, means perplexing ; religion was not degraded into task-

work, it was infused and imprinted on the heart: they learned to repress their passions and their selfish feelings, to become courteous and compassionate, active and useful; to bend their tempers to the mildness of their teacher's, to practise cheerfully the every-day duties of life, and, unrepiningly, to endure the dictatorship of Monimia. This last, though beyond that plastic season when the infelicities of education might be rectified, and irreparably injured by the early stimulants applied to her love of praise, yet was softened by her intercourse with Helen; her tones were modulated, and her rage for declamation was subdued. Luckily for the little ones, their mother was so impressed with Monimia's superiority of intellect that the upas-juice of flattery was never administered to *them*; their generous impulses were permitted to expand beneath wholesome culture, unassoiled by that desecrating influence.

The person next to myself most benefitted by the taming of these petty insurgents, was Quinilla. Whether Slauveen, under whom they had enrolled themselves, had incited them to plague her, or that the children by nature were

prone to annoy, and had a keen scent for those most sensitive to worrying, certain it is that very mischievous pranks were played off upon our cousin ; she had called them “ the torments,” and they were resolved to earn the distinction. Monimia—the *Ægis* of Quinilla—would have repelled open aggression, but the little mutineers were shrewd enough to perceive where most they might provoke. Feathers, caps, trimmings, the choicest varieties of Quinilla’s appointments were found day after day inhumanly crushed : the mischief, after a puzzling investigation was fixed on the “ torments ;” they were punished ; bruising was carried on the more vigorously ; laceration commenced ;—a white bugled petticoat was cruelly mutilated, and a little pet monkey was caught in the fact of rending a tucker ! a real blonde tucker ! The children were fully exculpated ;—The monkey was chained, having bitten Quinilla for beating him, but the very next day, which was also the day of a hop, (*anglicè dance*) was Jocko discovered regaling his vengeance upon an amber crape dress ; the identical dress our cousin had intended to blaze in ! ’twas dreadful !

Dionysius and I were aloft in our Shekinah, digesting a noun, when the matter was spread in an outcry so piercing that, after exchanging a gape of dismay, we rushed to the field of action. Every living item of the household had rushed there before us, with Katy to boot, who had volunteered to run off the jelly. Jocko was the prominent actor ; Quinilla in a frenzy of sensation, had imprudently 'rescued' the dress ; Jack, presto, transferred himself from her trunk to her shoulder : there he sat, "like the *devil* incarnate," said Katy ; his tail coiled tight round Miss O'Toole's throat, his fore-paw stretched out to re-grapple the petticoat, his muzzle poked into the enemy's face that her eyes might enjoy a grin diabolical !—while he and his victim kept up a concert of chatter and shriek so appalling, that poor Mr. Bullock clapped his hands to his ears and flew round the room as if he were horsewhipped, exhorting us all, by gestures affectingly earnest, to strangle the imp. It would seem that the monkey understood these perspicuous signals as being applied to Quinilla ; he tightened his noose : our cousin grew blue in the face ; she

bobbed and she ducked to get rid of him; he reproved her by nipping her ear—the blood trickled down—Mrs. Mulligan whooped—attempts to dislodge him brought on the like barbarous vengeance—coaxing he scorned.

“Give him the garment, ma’am,” roared Mr. Bullock, “’tis only a rag sure.”

“Who unfastened the brute,” said mamma, “was it you, Miss Diana?”

“It might be the king of the gipsies, *ma*,” squeaked little Timotheus.

“Will nobody shoot him?” bawled Katy—“he’ll *curtail* the young ’ooman.”

“You fool,” cried Slauveen, “would you shoot Miss O’Toole?”

“’Tis a desperate business, Sir,” whispered my pupil.

Monimia directed an ominous nod at the nursery group, who lurked in the back-ground blinking at Jocko through tears that were very suspicious.

I had tried to pluck Jack from his tribune: my attempt had been followed by a vigorous contraction of tail, and a spiteful address to the suffering auricle. Quinilla, from affection

or stultification, still hugged the distressed-looking garb: her shrieks were heart-melting. "What cowards you are! can't you throttle the wretch?" cried Dion the elder. 'Twas a cruel alternative: though, tingling remorsefully, my hand was extended to 'cut short the life of poor Jack'—Slauveen slid between us, and, twitching the garment from Quinny, he held it to Jocko. The brute's ruffled crest instantaneously sank; he snatched at the spoil, jumped into a corner, grinned at his trophy vindictively, tossed it from paw to paw, beat it, and bit it; and then, with a look of blended remorse and compassion, laid its mangled remains at the feet of his bleeding antagonist, clucking an epitaph.

There was a terrific pause—Mr. B. looked belligerent, but Jocko's incisors were awful, so he buttoned up his pockets, half clenched his fist and turned himself nimbly back to his shop. Jack now hugging the neck of his crony Slauveen, contented with one hideous gnash at Quinilla, was borne to the kitchen, cooing affectionately his parting compliments.

I considered the mischief irreparable. Qui-

nilla bent Dido-wise over the disconsolate shreds ; but matters were righted beyond all expectation. Monimia presented a robe to her friend—real French manufacture ! Miss Mc Sweeny fitted it beautifully—the flounce was *shuperb*—and Barry the hairdresser fashioned two love-locks which concealed the disfiguring ear-slit.

Such malversations as these carried on by “the torments,” in conjunction with Joeko, had kept our cousin in ague-fits ; sometimes a wreath was embezzled, sometimes a tortoise-shell comb. Katy vowed Miss Quinilla’s beauty was melting, and that Mr. McCarthy would never come out with his offer while she looked such an object from fretting.

The reform effected by Helen was health to our cousin : her moral code contained no intermediate degrees ; people were vile or adorable, saints or infernals ; we were, now, angels ; the house was a heaven upon earth since we entered it ! This fervor encreased when she found that Helen gently, but firmly, resisted entreaties to join the dry drums and *hops*. Miss O’Toole I believe felt a twinge of remorse for

her conduct to Marion, and was grateful to us for our silence: she was on her penitentials, and tried to blot out her transgression by benignant eulogia: 'twas surprising such a young thing as that—meaning Helen—should *mew* herself into an attic, and stick to her coal-scuttle bonnet! so prudent! but Helen was always a pattern; and really Watty was wonderful gentlemanlike considering his shabby appearance. What a scholar he was!

CHAPTER II.

Beautiful Lee ! I've seen thee blustering,
Impetuous, and turgid at thy mouth—
But, stealing from the basin of thy birth
Thou seem'st enamoured of tranquillity ;
Contented with a narrow, noiseless track,
Clear imaging the lovely banks which lie
In Eden-like repose—

THUS we lived on, as unknowing and almost as unknown as when we were dwellers of the wilds : we learned nothing of the structure and habits of gay life ; politics were a dead letter ; we could not comprehend the merits of the conflict which in 1815 decided the fate of Europe ; nay, the commonest topics were to us as obscure, as were verbal inflections to Dion ; in the wide range of literature also, I

could recognize only my ancients; not a ray from modern geniuses reached me.

It was surprising that I had even the wit to suspect the Bullock clique was not so exalted as in days of eld we imagined it; that the pictures were daubs, and the statues were plaster; and that the parties which met at *the Vulcan* might not be made up of the Cork aristocracy.

Yet pleasant are ye in reminiscence, ye hops and social rubbers! ye were tocsins which sounded us a holiday! during your reign, recitation, declension, rhyming, and invoice, remained at a stand-still. Monimia was engaged in adorning the supper-table; Quinilla in penning *invites*; Dionysius in practising *steps* with Miss McCarthy; the small fry were decoyed to fill flower-jars, and Mr. B. was driven from the epistolary parlour, which during the *dansomania* was appropriated to a snug casino-set.

Thus were Helen and I left for a day, sometimes for two days, free to expand our wings; these merry-makings always bequeathing such lassitude and such lavish material for chat, that

the drawing-room couches bore the weight of our pupils the whole morning after. How we rejoiced ! from grubs transformed to butterflies !

Summer had set in ; we had found out an unfrequented valley a few miles from the city—westward—near the junction of the Awbeg with the Luvius—the beautiful Lee,

———“ Which like an Island fair
Encloseth Cork with his divided flood,”

This was our haunt ; we felt a gush of our old joyousness when, having traversed the *fragrant* bye-lanes, the dyke, and salmon-weir which intervened, we would find ourselves free of the world upon the river's bank, tracing its blue vein upwards. The limit of our walk was a wood somewhat precipitous ; into this we would climb and sometimes read, but oftener bring back olden times with sad discourses of the glen, the ruin, the sheeling, our Granny and Marion. The ragged walls of an old castle on the opposite bank conjured up the startling traditionary tales which used to form our winter evening's banquet ; sullen and lonely, the deso-

late fabric seemed fitting habitation for the robber *genius loci* who, it was reported, once haunted it.

Thus in our *Desert-mountain*, with no one to observe us but the cowboy and muscle-gatherer, would we efface the sordid images of city-life by winning back melancholy yet welcome recollections. We lived again our childish years, forgot the present, and sometimes dared to glance at what the future might admit us to—not this life's future; that was a sealed book which (had we the authority) nothing would have tempted us to uncloset.—Here, too, we read our letters, often brought unopened to this solitary resting-place. Fielding's were addressed to me, Marion's to Helen—the former made us glad and mournful, that such a friend was ours, and that we were separated.

Fielding said little of himself, nothing of his father, from which omission I drew an obvious inference; but the spirit of unabated interest for us, was manifest in every line: there was no distinct address to Helen; her name was scarcely mentioned; and yet the most elaborate outpouring of tenderness could not so

vividly have revealed the depth and excess of his attachment.

Marion's communications were satisfactory, although they proved that Fielding's implied doubt of Lord Dellival's extreme danger did not inculcate, wrongfully, our noble brother. She informed us that letters had met them on their route which had assured Lord Sanford of his brother's convalescence : in consequence he had deferred visiting castle Dellival until they had accomplished a tour which he had long contemplated for her improvement.—“ My heart is in the glen,” said Marion, “ but my husband is so kind that it would seem captious to dissent ; I must learn to act the marchioness, he says ; he will introduce me bye and bye to a model in his sister-in-law—Can she equal Madame Wallenberg ; if I must be a fine Lady I would rather imitate the Baroness than any other ; but I feel I can be nobody but Marion.”

This letter bore the Dover post-mark—a second was addressed to us from France, a third from Italy ; all harping upon home, but apparently conceived in a more contented spirit—She would have such wonders to relate

when we should meet again—she had visited the birth-place of some of Walter's heroes—Lord Sanford was bent on taking her to Greece; she would invoke Socrates' *familiar*, and adjure him to visit the glen; her Irish *familiars*, would be *so proud of his acquaintance*; she bade us fancy her on the heights of the Acropolis, and she would fancy us reading her letter beneath the alder-trees—She was collecting antiques for the castle museum; and pictures and busts of Walter's hoary friends: she would bring home a plan of the Parthenon and of all the unsanctified temples. "Where are you reading this letter," she asked "on the headland? on Fairy-mount? Lord Sanford says it is vain to expect one from you, while we pilgrimize thus—How I long for one! how I wish that this tour were over, and this visit to Dellival. Does Granny talk much of me? I dream of nothing but home and should envy you all but for love of you."

Thus did Marion's guileless confidence picture us in the glen: her letters were under covers directed by his Lordship, who it was clear took no pains to correct her mistake. I believe that he little cared where we were, and that his

address, "post-office Cork," was hap-hazard. The envelope indeed of Marion's last letter contained a few lines in which he expressed a desire to serve us, wished Helen would join her sister &c. ; but hinted discreetly, that until Lady Sanford should be able to give us some definite date it would be useless to write to her. He hoped in some months to be settled at Delhi-val, or at his own seat in Herts, or in London. I admired the off-hand coolness with which he cancelled his promises ; in truth I should have been astonished, only, by their observance ; such light deviations were every day lapses it would be vulgar to blush at : candor and sympathy were common-place terms in usage with common-place people, when they got up a pitiful tale.

On our return from these rambles my aunt and uncle would be found seated as we had left them ;—she stitching away as alertly as ever—their conversation, though apparently earnest, was always suspended when we entered : sometimes we overheard a straggling word—a name which made our hearts bound.—Next to news of Marion they rejoiced at news of Fielding—

"That man singly," said my uncle—"subverts the outcry against poor human-nature." They considered his abrupt departure had been planned, simply to avoid acknowledgments. My aunt would frequently ask Helen whether any of her high-flown heroes had ever displayed generosity so matter-of-fact as Mr. Fielding's; so unselfish; he was no harum-scarum, hot-headed, enthusiast, that would run his neck into a noose for love; he was a man *good* for the *sake of goodness*, like Fitzgerald.

My uncle would sadly wave his head in disavowal, and fall into a reverie, which usually ended with a declaration that he was beginning to feel strong enough for some employment; when my aunt would nimbly digress to matters totally irrelevant; now descanting on the silence of Madame Wallenberg, now wondering whether the Baron had been at logger-heads with his old foes, the French, at Waterloo; now dilating upon the bravery of Theodore, whose *début* in Flanders had conferred on him the glory and the scars he coveted.

Cork boasted no itinerant postman; when my avocations permitted, I went myself to the

office, but oftener made use of little Phil, who was ever hovering between the Vulcan and Mrs. Green's, full primed to worry pigs and apple-women, to run of errands for a copper, or to spare his crony, Breesthough, by going through the business of turn-spit. He was employed as 'special runner ; for Slauveen, (acting scrub and shoe-black in the morning, gentleman usher at noon, butler at dinner, and waiter in the evening, besides being pork curator, groom to Lanty Maw, and occasional driver of the jaunting car,) could not be expected to perform *properly* the office of envoy.—“ Little Nabbs moreover has a thousand legs to relieve each other, and would find his way to the world's end and farther without a sign-post” said Mrs. Mulligan ; “ he's like the wind, every where at once.”

One day, a gala-day, I set out for the post-office and reached it panting from my speed ; for, since the *day of the exchange*, I was shy of traversing the frequented streets, flinching at sight of old women behind apple-stalls—“ There's no letter for you,” said the man, turning hastily to some more worshipful interroga-

tor—I walked back disconsolate : at the top of Castle-street near the memorable '*change* I espied Phil, huckstering with my old crone to win a fifth kerry-pippin for his half-penny. "Ye got a letter did ye?" said the boy—I shook my head, hastening off for fear of an attack from my Pomona: "Why didn't ye send *I*; I's always lucky," vociferated Phil.

Helen met me prepared for news and a ramble; my moody look drove back the flush of hope which had lighted up her features; we began our walk dejectedly, but, before we reached the weir, a barking, shouting, and hallowing behind us, drew our attention; it was Phil flourishing a letter, and followed by Breesthough pekeering for joy at having evaded the wheel.

"I saw ye looked glum," said the boy, "so I galloped to post-office corner, and bothered the man at the shutter-hole till he cocked his *right* eye on this letter—he often skips over *um*—just tell us! be *that* from the Englisher?"

I nodded.

"Hoorraw," shouted Phil, "long life to your letters Misther Fielding Sir; come Breesthough—Molly Green have a duck to roast.—"

"How did you know where to find us?" said Helen.

"I know'd it," said Phil, with a wink; "I see'd you stuck under the bushes one morning when I was a stickin' the muscles beyont; heir mouths are wide open to day, 'tis so sunny—but we havn't time for a thrust at um—the duck must be done—come Bresthough my buck."

When arrived at the wood I opened Fielding's letter; it began with the usual cautions against over toil, and insinuated a suspicion, deduced from my own communications that our position in the Bullock family was irksome—if we would look on him as one made wealthy for the purpose of dispensing wealth, we might return to our home and seek higher, because more extensive usefulness, in ameliorating the condition of our neglected mountaineers.

"We must not think of it," said Helen quickly, "we must not think of it."

The letter proceeded in a lighter strain—"You will hear of me soon from a friend of mine—Miss Berrington—or, as she is styled in literary chronicle, Fanny Berrington—she is

bent on a flitting to Ireland, a flitting extraordinary, for she purposes, in one little month, to fill a port-folio with inklings of Erin; to translate its Oghums, to study its social economy; to pilfer a few of its Legends, (the wilder the better,) and glean histrionical anecdotes, bulls, and sanctology. In short she resolves to unmistify Ireland with a wave of her feather, and to put it in luminous type, set off with illustrations and glossary.—She is dubious as yet in what shape to exhibit her gleanings—in tragedy—comedy—manners and customs—in romance or in earnest—prosy or poesie. You must see her—I entreat you will. She passes through Cork, with all of *haut-ton* curiosi, errati, literati, &c., that she can enlist. Do not let her caprices dismay you; there is a mine of true ore beneath a tinfoil surface—she knows your address and will announce her arrival.”

I lifted my eyes in astonishment; Helen's were fixed on a gushing wood-rill with a look of deep thoughtfulness. “’Tis the oddest injunction,” said I—“the very oddest—what can I have to do with this erratic genius, a second

Monimia—one is enough—it is the strangest injunction !”

Helen seemed tracing the progress of the rill over a moss-bank.

“ Were it Lord Sanford who heralded in *his* flighty way this flighty young lady—but Fielding ! ’tis quite inconceivable !” I felt harassed and added in a tone of vexation, “ What *can* it mean ? pray Helen speak to me.”

“ You must see this Miss Berrington, Walter.”

“ Must I,” said I, half ashamed of the fright which sent the hot blood to my face.

“ You *must* see her,” Helen repeated, without raising her eyes from the bank.

“ A learned lady too,” I exclaimed, with increasing repugnance ; “ drugged with Latin and doggrel perhaps ; a missy, inoculated with *cacoethes scribendi* ; a literary lady !”

“ It is for that very reason I wish you to see her.”

“ For that reason ! You comprehend then the motive which induced—”

“ I do not ; but the circumstance of Miss Berrington being a literary person strikes me

as propitious to a project I have long revolved."

"A project!"

"For extricating my uncle," resumed Helen:
"it was planned while he was under arrest."

I was too much amazed to apostrophize.

Helen mused for awhile, and then turned to me with the air of preparation which used to usher in a long story. "One evening," she began; "it was during your illness and Marion's unhappy—" she paused, looked at me earnestly, and shook her head, as if unable to proceed: but the weakness was momentary—"we were seated, my aunt, Mr. Fielding, and I, round the fire, silent and anxious, for we had left Marion in the first calm sleep that had visited her since—since her derangement. Grace watched her. Mr. Fielding, usually so self-possessed, on this evening was dreadfully agitated; he thought the crisis at hand; we dared not look round, each fearing to meet the eye of the other. Thus we sat for a time—such a time!—At last the door slowly opened and Marion entered; I could not have been more startled by her ghost: she drew the little stool, which she used to call hers when a child, to my

feet, laid her head on my lap and said, 'Now Helen begin, I like best that German tale Madame Wallenberg was so fond of; now Helen.'

"She nestled her sweet head closer, sighing contentedly; I began with a faltering voice; it was the first time she had recognised any one for many a sad week. Tears were near choking me; by degrees I breathed freely; my story went on—'Tis beautiful isn't it aunt?" said Marion.—'Very beautiful indeed,' sobbed my poor aunt, who had been observant of nothing but her darling. I proceeded until I came to the point at which I was accustomed to break off. "'Tis bed-hour now,' said Marion, 'good night aunt, good night.' "From that evening we date her recovery; the next and the next, she would ask for a story."

Helen paused, but quickly resumed. "It was Mr. Fielding's remark on my simple tales which kindled a hope I nursed fondly for many months afterwards: indeed with the exception of one fleeting interval I have never lost sight of it. The remark was made playfully. 'Your vivid fancy,' he said, 'might serve for that

hidden elixir philosophers dreamed of so long : it might transmute into gold your traditional lore ; will you publish your fictions ?'—There was evidently no serious meaning attached to these words, yet they haunted me—Gold ! Gold would effect my uncle's release ! Quinilla, in her amplifying way, had often expatiated on the *oceans of wealth* acquired by book-making, hinting that she had some notion of trying her fortune in London that way—Ireland was a poor place for talent, she said. I heeded her little at the time, and now I recall her extravagant statements with cautious abatement—still I might effect something—Oh, Walter, fancy the joy, the ecstasy, of lightening the care which bows down my poor uncle !—I *have* written—my story is finished, but until now I despaired. There was nobody here to advise with ; how could I get to London, or who would aid me, if there, to dispose of my book."

The idea of liquidating thousands by writing a book, was monstrous to my crude conceptions. I could not resolve the paradox—I, who had hitherto looked upon literature as the sublime relaxation of gifted, unsordid minds, to

find it degraded to minor speculations; made venal!—a matter of traffic!—it oppressed me. Then again the idea of deliverance from debt and the attic elated me: my veneration for letters, and my aversion from teaching them, caused a war of sensations. To write for other than the grand aim of advancing human knowledge, to be incited thereto by a stimulus less pure than the promptings of philanthropic, self-conscious genius—how humbling! But then to write oneself out of a prison and into a livelihood!

“Will a book do all this?” I ejaculated, “one book, Helen!”

“I don’t know,” replied Helen, “but if one sell, another may; I can write again and again. Mr. Fielding would not have praised indiscreetly; he said, I could make my hearers at home wherever I carried them.”

“Did you ever give him a hint of your project?” said I.

“Yes,” she replied, stifling a sigh; “on the day which promised us a life of sunshine. I had just finished my manuscript when you entered my chamber—you remember—the

table was strown with the efforts of my happy labour—it *was* happy Walter; I felt a strangely pleasurable excitement which shortened the hours I spent at it—Mr. Fielding I thought would assist me in making it profitable; even your mournful aspect did not wholly extinguish the joy I felt. When satisfied by *his* assurances that nothing distressing had happened, and finding him silent, I took courage and abruptly disclosed my little scheme—It was then that—You know the rest.”

I wished to interrupt the course of her thoughts, and enquired what expectations she had founded on her authorship.

“I have heard of extraordinary sums,” she replied, “but these were doubtless the rewards of extraordinary genius: if I can release you from drudgery, Walter, and see you look healthier, and find I could earn a subsistence for all of us by teaching and writing—if I could effect even this—she burst into tears—I should not feel so acutely perhaps that we are poor outcasts.”

It was the only time she had reverted to my calamitous disclosure since she had herself in-

terdicted the subject. Some corroding idea must have caused this unusual ebullition. A feeling of forlornness took hold of me—Yes, we were outcasts—this was the abiding grief; all others were but wayfarers! I leaned my head against the tree which shaded us, and burst into complaint. Helen's emotion was instantly suppressed; without attempting to calm me, she led me back to her new scheme, which, if successful, she remarked, would put us in possession of that tranquil retirement we panted for. By degrees she unfolded a vista of comfort—the arrival of Miss Berrington would smooth difficulties she had considered insurmountable. I suggested the advantage of *her* seeing the erudite lady, but Helen shrank from this—there was, I thought, something more in her repugnance than the mere disinclination she expressed to revealing her authorship; so I promised, reluctantly, to see this Miss Berrington; during our walk home we talked over, or brooded on, this important speculation.

CHAPTER III.

Not to be unhappy is unhappynesse ;
And miserie not t'have known miserie :
For the best way unto discretion is
The way that leads us by adversitie.

Daniel.

I looked forward to the announcement of our new *rara avis* with the apprehension one feels at the approach of the operator who is about to relieve one from pain by extracting a tooth. The following letter from Lord Sanford diverted the course of our anxieties.

GENEVA.

“ DEAR WALTER.

“ We were on our route homeward when obliged to halt here. Lady Sanford, it is

apprehended, will soon become a mother—prematurely. You may imagine my alarm, for I had hoped to reach England before her *accouchement*. Her physicians peremptorily insist on our awaiting the event where we are ; but she is desponding, restless, hysterical, and beseeches me to take her *home*. I would give millions that I had acceded to her request before : now it is impossible. Will you and Helen write to her?—I entreat you will—instantly—she has such excitable fancies—persists that her uncle is dead : write her a quieting letter—from the glen—you understand. The life of this child is so very important—my brother may feel annoyed at my marriage—the birth of an heir would conciliate matters.

“ By a letter from Fielding I have learned that you are all well : but Lady Sanford will not believe it ; she has the best medical aid procurable here ; still I am in mortal apprehension. A son would crown the family hopes, and pave the way for Lady Sanford’s reception—my marriage is as yet unavowed—pray write promptly—you shall hear from me when I can speak decisively.”

This letter excited a tumult of fears, but Marion was the exclusive object of *our* anxieties. We cared nothing for the disappointment of the family hopes, and little, in comparison with hers, for the life of his lordship's representative. I read the characteristic epistle again and again, and every time with increased perturbation.

"Medical aid!" exclaimed Helen. "Alas! one familiar voice, one face of happy days, would be a cordial more salutary to that pining spirit than medicine. Think of her so timid, so affectionate, turning her poor eyes on cold-looking strangers! His child!—his family!—annoyed!—what a term!"

Our letters, without touching on dangerous particulars, conveyed the most persuasive assurances that my uncle was better than when she left him. I took them to the post, pondering the while, on the feasibility of journeying, myself, to Geneva. We discussed the matter seriously during our vigil of that night; but obstacles sprung up, one after another, so serious, that with bitter regret I determined to await the event of a second letter; it was essential to keep back, for awhile, the contents of this. My

uncle's constitution was so much impaired, that we considered a certainty, however sorrowful, would try it less than suspense. We saw him only at meals, for we could not control our feverish impatience, and every moment we could abstract from our pupils was devoted to rumination on what the morrow might bring.

A week rolled away—another—at last I held a letter post-marked 'Geneva.' It announced, exultingly, the birth of the future Marquis Dellival and the safety of Marion.

We flew to my aunt; she thanked God, but without exultation—"Go children, go," she said, "I must break this to Fitzgerald myself." We joined them at dinner; they were abstracted and silent, and rather promoted our leaving them early; when we returned two hours afterwards the hum of their voices, in low consultation, reached us as we passed to our chambers.

Until we received Lord Sanford's alarming letter the image which night-long had haunted my pillow, since Fielding's announcement, was a moon-eyed hobgoblin, ticketed "Miss Ber-rington;" wielding a lexicon and a Latin grammar; and now that my tremors for Marion

were over, my fancy, in feverish sleep, engendered again the form of the literary maid. I was nightly beset : it rehearsed and declaimed ; it flung rhymes at me ; I tried to exorcise the chattering witch, to wheedle her into divorce—to no purpose—she was worse than Monimia.

Meantime the Bullock diversions proceeded ; dances,—though we bordered on the dog-days—concerts, tea-parties, either at home or at Sunday's Well—a pretty hamlet of the suburbs which boasted a banqueting-house memorable in the festive days of old Cork.

Dionysius had got to '*Nubes*,' and there he stuck ; his intellect had performed its march ; the art of man could not impel him forward. Quadrilles were just then imported : *dos-à-dos* and *demie queue de chat* kept him *in nubibus* ; when I thought him considering *a case*, it was *chaine des dames* he was considering ; this was made evident by some unconscious interjection " Hang that figure 'twould puzzle the Danes."

One sunny morning, as I was arranging the *fag* of the day, and trying to combat a nausea induced at sight of the thumb-worn grammar, my pupil made a *chassée en avant* into the attic,

trolling a French tune. He forced me to piroouette by a seizure of my hands and a sudden whirl round—this amazed me extremely, for hitherto he had been undeviatingly respectful; the source of his elation lay in the definitive arrangement of a party that had been planned the night before, but left pendent on the weather. The Bullocks, with the *élite* of their acquaintance, were to breakfast at Sunday's Well. "Lots of fun all the morning," said Dion, poizing himself gracefully, "and a finish-up at home in the evening; the McCarthys are asked, and the Whelpleys; Miss Hinch, Tommy Short and the Miss Moriartys: come with us can't you Mr. Fitzgerald? It murders one's fun, it does, to see you and your sister.—Ah can't you come with us why?"

"Dionysius why! why Dionysius," screamed Quinilla; "the Hurleys are here, and Miss Hinch; 'tis near eight—the hot cake will be cold; bring a penny for the ferry-man—hasten will you? we must go round by Broad-lane to call Mr. McCarthy."

"Go, go," said I, apprehending an approach,

"Come can't you then," drawled the good-natured youth, "ah can't you come now?"

"Dionysius why!"

"Going," cried Dion, snatching up a diagram scrawled on a blank leaf of Ainsworth, which he had abstracted to embody 'ladies' chain' upon.

There was a mirthful commingling of voices, an incessant yelp from that old plague pug; screaming 'good morrows,' from new comers, a clatter down stairs, and a slam of the door which agitated the bellows of Vulcan.

Silence—celestial silence, hail! thou art pleasant even in an attic.

Not a cat seemed astir—I looked round contentedly—The day was inviting—so were my hoar companions—I chucked the grammar into a desk and took down Phædon. Love of reading how loveable art thou! a sponge to wipe off the registered scores of old care; all other loves harass—but thou!—thou art the curer of minds! shedding balm on the fester, extracting the gall!

Helen's entrance drew me from the death bed of Socrates.—"The children are gone too,"

said she, "they were unwilling, so I promised them a story to night ; we have time for a walk ; how ill you look Walter !"

"Shall we go to the post-office first?" said I.

"Phil promised to wait for our letters ; we may trust him," said Helen. She took up my hat : a slight flush suffused her face as she tried to shape it to its original mould : the bent and rusty beaver well justified the epithet 'shabby' which Quinilla had applied to my appearance—"Tis in keeping with my pepper and salt," said I, glancing at my thread-bare coat ; "the livery of a poor scholar Helen."

"No matter," replied Helen, sighing profoundly, "no matter ; I shall take a pride in seeing you dressed like a gentleman if—but pray do not be sanguine."

There was a tap at the door. "Are you here?" said Slauveen, thrusting in his unpowdered head, which preluded that his company tone was put off. "Just take Miss Helen a turn on the Mall Sir: 'twill transport you to see the strange carriages going from Macdowel's to Blarney—bates the jaunting car into a truckle—I see um last night drivin' mad through the

town after scourin' through Dublin and Wicklow: 'tis from Lunnion they come, with such droves o' tormentors!"

"Tourists," said I, tingling as if galvanized.

"How frightened you look," said Slauveen, "'tish't ogurs they are—they won't ate you—do you want to make monks o' yourself an' Miss Helen?—Where's the ould times Sir?—when Miss Marion went away half the fun o' the world went with her!"

"Not *your* fun Slauveen," said Helen, "*your* merry days are set in."

Slauveen looked hard at her. "I never thought that you could offend me, Miss Helen; 'tis long before *thim* that's gone would aggravate me that way—do you think I like *now* better than the time that I used to carry Miss Marion about on my shoulder; God forgive you, Miss! 'tish't *thim* that snivels that dies o' grief—I haven't time to be braking my heart; Miss Quinny takes good care o' that."

An unconscious sob burst from Helen. I was aware of our follower's mutable temper so I struck the mirthful key by enquiring what

our cousin's commissions for the evening's revel might be.

"Commissions! you're right, Sir, she gives more than the king; how many do you think she bestowed on ourself this *sultry* morning?—Reckon um, will ye?—Her false curls, her frill, her silk stockings, her feathers; to Barry's for combs and the pinching tongs, black hair pins and white pins; two yards o' pink ribbon; two ounces o' bugles; a penn'orth o' gum, three quarters o' quilling, a bit o' court plaster for beauty spots; a stand behind; to the clear-starcher's—scold her—the book-muslin petticoat was made up too limber; to borrow Miss Dogherty's ear-bobs—"

The count became tedious; I enquired whether he had seen Philly Nabbs.

"My head to an onion she have nabbed him to go for her turban, Sir; she'd sack and bag forty Slauveen's; wasn't it delightful to see Jocko a paying his dues to her!"

Helen looked grave.

"Well, Miss Helen, the saints needn't grudge us our joke—What keeps us alive but a laugh?—Have you any commands for my

mother, Miss? I'm going to see her—she's pining. But for Lanty an' the rest o' you I'd never come back."

"Grace is quite well," said Helen eagerly, "I heard from her yesterday—she makes no complaint."

Slauveen drew himself up. "Grace Mc Quillan never complains Miss—but I know her—the thorn's in her heart—who sits in her chimney? who hears her old stories? sad thoughts, sad thoughts!"

The conversation was again verging to a dangerous point: I put on my hat.

"That my old master's servant should see the young Geraldine in such a *caubogue*!" said Slauveen, "I could look at you once and not be ashamed of you Sir—but now!" he turned abruptly and quitted the room.

"I will read here, until you return," said Helen, wiping her eyes. "Phil loiters—pray go."

To avoid *paraders* my chosen route to the post-office was by a circumbendibus through back streets, bye lanes and other insertions; but impelled by the fates, or by instinctive mis-

givings associated with the *Lunnon tormentors*, I this day crossed the parade; and turned into George's street at the corner of which then stood the fashionable Hotel. Motley groups of beggars and idlers, as dispersing after sight of a raree-shew, intercepted my way. Opposite the door of the Hotel, like a post, stood Phil Nabbs, clutching a band-box, and gaping at a thing of his own shape and size, in boots and a fanciful livery, who was leaning against the stair-baluster, and tossing a bit of paper up and down in a hat encircled with a glittering band. Poor Phil never had a hat, and might have been moralizing on the caprices of fortune, which had lavished gew-gaws on one child and left the other just *not* naked.

"Philip;" said I.

"There's no letter," said Phil, cunnngly evading the reprimand: "my knot came undone just as the coaches come up—all off for Blarney—a shower o' company!—But wohn't you help me to tie up the band-box? 'tis a *tur-bot*! 'tis Miss Quinny's."

In trying to assist the child I awkwardly let go the string, and the turban fell into the

street. Phil screamed, "*Mulyare ! millia murder ! Miss Quinny ! we're ruined ! Oyeh ! Oyeh ! Oyeh !*" The liveried jackanapes laughed: a window flew up—I thought twenty echoes repeated the laugh, and hastily turned on my steps, pursued by Phil with the band-box.

"That grinnin *boohleen*, is behind us," said Phil ; "shall I *hot* him a thump ?"

"Pray direct me to the Main-street," quoth the booted affair advancing.

"May be we will wid a hook," replied Phil, "'tis a long street you're looking for, wid stone jugs* at both ends of it—who may you want there ? one Neddy Nabbs is it ?"

"A Mr. Fitzgerald."

"Are you blind then ?" cried Phil—"don't you see him before you ?"

The boy dubiously eyed me, twirling a note.

"*Erra* then is that the way you use *our* letters," said Phil, snapping the paper ; "to be playing pitch an' toss wid um ! what call have you wid *our* letters at all at all you left handed *Kitthogue* !"

* Jails.

He threw down the band-box and with a gladiatorial flourish made a run at Boots, who ran away.

The note was directed to 'Walter Fitzgerald Esquire, Mrs. Green's, South Main-street.'

"Miss Berrington arrived at Macdowel's Hotel last night, and leaves Cork to-morrow; she has a letter for Mr. Fitzgerald which she has been requested to deliver in person. Miss Berrington has promised to join an exploring party after noon, therefore she hopes that Mr. Fitzgerald will favor her with an early call."

"If I do not see her at once," thought I, "I shall not have courage to see her at all." I retraced my way to George's-street, involuntarily re-iterating, "Miss Berrington arrived at Macdowel's last night."

I ascended the steps of the Hotel just as a splendid equipage emblazoned with a coronet drove up; I slunk into a corner—a lady elegantly attired stepped out of the carriage; a person whom I judged to be the master of the Hotel obsequiously accosted her, hoping no accident had occurred, "One of the horses restive—

nothing more," was the reply. She passed up stairs addressing a few words to a servant in attendance.

"Can that be Miss Berrington," thought I—"she is more stately than volatile."

I had instinctively ensconced myself behind the hall-door, looking eagerly for some one who might introduce me. Turmoil was rife—the 'shower o' company' had mustered all hands: servants of both sexes ran to and fro, jostling and squabbling; not one seemed inclined to be civil: a battalion of beggars surrounded the door, discharging a volley compounded of blessings and threats, and bad luck to *yez*; the clatter of bells was incessant, the roaring for waiters.

"Can I see Miss Berrington?" said I, arresting a man with a tray full of glasses, and displaying my note as a mark of authority.

"Stand out of the way my good lad," said the man, turning briskly up stairs, "a petition to shew! with twenty five dinners to serve! good luck to your larning."

This was a home-cut, I felt a vehement propension to leave. At last a chub-footed, merry-

faced girl came out with a pail the contents of which she threatened to hurl at the mendicant army. "'Tisn't in your good-looking sowl to swindle the *dissoluts*," croaked a limping virago who led the besiegers; two ragged-haired, hunger-pinched urchins squealing from a blanket that was strung on her back, "make her hansom our hand *wid* a tinpenny beauty; blind Mawria legged off *wid* our share o' the last."

"Can I see Miss Berrington?" said I, submissively addressing the 'beauty,' who had planted her bucket just in my way.

"Why you poor sickly-looking show!" said the girl, "'twould be rale charity to do *you* a good turn—you'll be having more head's than hats soon! follow me up," she added, whispering and winking—"but never tell no one 'twas I that carried you to her—Now," she cried pushing me with a force of muscle I could not resist into a spacious apartment, "coax what you can out of her."

The lady I had before seen was walking up and down the room, she stopped suddenly at the ungentle jarring of the door. My injection had been so forcible and unexpected that I had

not presence of mind to uncover my head or apologize ; nor was my confidence restored by the cold, enquiring eye she turned on me. I had expected smiles and loquacity, and instead of accounting for the frigid air of the lady by the *manner* of my own unannounced entrance, I felt it as designed to repel me. The interrogatory look became painful."

"Madam," I stammered at last, "I have come according to your request."

"Ah ! true, true," interrupted the lady ; "*you* are the person then"—she continued her *promenade* leaving me to stand, and to fill up the break. Her lofty and distant demeanour piqued me into self-possession, I took off my hat and assumed an air of indifference, resolving that she should be the next speaker. She sat down, drew a table with writing materials towards her ; her pen moved rapidly for a minute or two, then was suspended, while she addressed me without deigning to turn her regards from the paper.

"I intend to leave my servants and equipage here, and I wish to know, honestly, if there be

danger in travelling alone—at least under your *sole* protection ; I am told you are trust-worthy : my route lies, I believe, through the wildest tracts of this country—are the natives peaceable?—you look young—I expected to see an older person.”

She delivered this extraordinary speech slowly ; pausing at intervals to continue her notes : thus I had opportunity to survey at leisure, the proposer of a scheme which set all my profound conjectures at fault. She was a handsome woman, very handsome, but of more years than I had adjudged to Miss Berrington. The cast of her features was marked and decided, but not prepossessing. Madame Wallenberg’s grandly moulded face was softened by a graciousness shining out to encourage the humble ; but here, the expression was of a cold, resolute, self-enclosed character, which no one could coax into affection or cheat into shedding a tear ; thus much I inferred from the aspect of the lady ; even the roll of her large, dark eyes, and the slowly measured words expressed haughty intrepidity ; her accent was singularly

guttural, and her intonation harsh. She had thrown off her bonnet when she began to write, and braids of jet-black hair wreathed round her head, added to the imposing stamp of her features.

The strangeness of the proposal implied in her speech, had not impeded the minuteness of my inspection ; on the contrary I was excited to the utmost stretch of observation by surprise. Fielding was not a man to jest : what end was to be answered by my becoming the fellow tourist of this imperious-looking dame ? no more like the Miss Berrington of my nightly phantasmagoria than I to Ajax.

“ You think the adventure too perilous,” she resumed, turning full her Judith eyes upon me — “ Be sincere—are the western roads passable ? I can endure inconvenience—rough ways will not deter me—fatigue is nothing, if you are faithful I will reward you handsomely.”

A cloudy suspicion of some mistake began to arise. “ You are Miss Berrington madam.”

“ *Miss Berrington !*” she repeated with a slight contraction of her awful brows ; “ I am the Marchioness Dellival.”

The blood rushed to my face: it seemed as if surprise had thrown her off her guard: she colored and turned from me impatiently; I felt as little inclination to prolong the interview; with a bow and a stammered apology I left the room.

CHAPTER IV.

A graceful foolerie,
A fair *cajolerie*,
And hurtless drollerie.

"WHAT did you get?" whispered my delusive conductress, who was lying *perdue* in the passage; "we go halves you know."

"I enquired for Miss Berrington," said I peevishly, "that is not the lady."

"Come along," said the girl, "there's only one more: she may be a Miss or a Madam; the rest are off for a fling. There—try your luck there."

I was now on my guard, and resisted the

effort she made at a *shove*, by rooting myself outside the door she had conducted me to.

"Announce Mr. Fitzgerald," said I.

She measured me with a humorous twinkle, giggling out "Misther!" and unceremoniously pushed in the door. "One Fitzgerald here, come to wait on you Ma'am."

"Pray shew him up," said a voice.

"Put on your hat," said my guide, nodding sagaciously, "you look twice as pitiful wid it. Shake like a bog, an' she'll b'lieve you."

My late ordeal had nerved me; the voice I had just overheard was soft and harmonious—I entered—Miss Berrington was looking out of a window, and, perhaps, not expecting so quick an approach, continued to look. Something seemed to amuse her—she laughed—I hemmed, and a face, more *piquant* than handsome, was turned towards me. I bowed.

"Mr. Fitzgerald?" said she, in a tone of enquiry. I bowed again.

"Pray be seated," said Miss Berrington, approaching me with a frankness and ease, in my mind, identified with perfect good-breeding; "pray be seated." This was repeated, and en-

forced by a lively and impatient gesture, although the lady herself remained standing.

I presented a chair—she drew it near mine, and addressed me in a tone of familiar pleasantry.

“I was rather afraid of my billet, for my messenger-moth is, like his mistress, new in the land—but—yes!—surely you entered some time ago!—I saw you when our *chaperon's* carriage drove up—you have not been waiting since then?”

I gave a hurried account of the accident which had, literally, *thrown* me into the presence of Lady Dellival.

“Exquisite!” said Miss Berrington, “it will serve for an anecdote. Write it—do—I’ll put it in my book—the turban prologue shall usher it in?”

Without the least *apparent* consciousness that I was a party concerned, she related the disaster of the band-box with such inimitable humour, that, although smarting at being shewn off in caricature, I could not help laughing.

“Had you seen the *dénoué* you must have

expended, as I did, the laughter of weeks," she continued; "perhaps you did; the *scena* took place but a short time before Lady Dellival's carriage returned."

This was said in a tone of seemingly genuine artlessness, yet there was a peering, malicious curve in the vivacious eye, whose side glance I caught, that confounded me; without pausing for reply she went on.

"I had an appointment which I wished to keep secret, so I would not enquire her Ladyship's reason for deserting our sight-seeing party to Blarney—it would have betrayed that I, also, was a seceder. But how do you like her? I mean our superb *bella donna*, you think her enchanting."

"Forbidding," said I, "the impression she made on me was singularly unpleasant."—Perhaps Lady Dellival's relationship to Lord Sanford had as much share, as her *hauteur* to myself, in the asperity of this remark, for candor might have found an excuse for her reserve in my 'shabby appearance.' I thought I detected a dimpling satisfaction in Miss Berrington's countenance.

"Do you mean Hippocrene when you say Hippocrass," said she, archly. "Forbidding ! unpleasant ! the gem of our galaxy ! the luminous centre ! She plays the first *role* ; when I said *Bella donna*, I did not intend deadly nightshade ; pray correct your erratum."

"You may note it a blunder," said I, insensibly animated to retort her badinage ; "but it is a blunder in taste ; the words were quite true to the thought."

"Her deportment is magisterial perhaps," said Miss Berrington, "but then the effect is sublime ; she awes one into believing she has a right to predominate : her reign has been long : humility may creep into fashion bye and bye, or sleek plausibility. No matter the alloy of the metal, provided this stamp be impressed—'tis the fashion'—Should hairbrainism obtain I have a chance. Lady Dellival and I are at antipodes ; but there are bodies you know which combine most intimately when their particles are in a state of antagonism—such odd bodies are I and the Marchioness ; she tolerates Fanny Berrington's flights ; I indite a ballad to her ladyship's eye-brow."

Though wondering that my audience did not come to a windup by the delivery of Fielding's letter, yet I willingly pursued the discussion of Lady Dellival, anxious to determine whether I had inferred correctly of a person who would probably, in a great degree, influence the future life of Marion.

"The Marchioness *might* have mistaken me for a post-boy," said I; "still even in addressing inferiors there is an amenity, a complaisance, which I know to be coincident with high-breeding; *she* seems to disdain—"

"There *you* are mistaken," interrupted Miss Berrington; "the suavity you commend she has no savour of: were you a Marshal or a Muleteer her demeanour would have been equally unbending, although the style might have varied somewhat. In this loftiness lies the *prestige* of her sway; inaccessible to concession as to opposition, what she *wills* to do, she *will* do, careless of aid or hostility, sufficient to herself, or, if not sufficient, satisfied to fall; she should have been the wife of our modern Attila."

"What a revolting character!"

“ Another mistake,” said Miss Berrington ; “ the *élite* of our glazed-paper circles copy her ; this monument-like look, is the fashion ; the graces are fettered ; the pretty *capricios* are ground by her chariot-wheels ; the frolic, the jest, all the merry expansions of social life, have died long ago of neglect ; laughter had drowned himself but that I hooked him out and keep him *in petto*. Times will change—there must be re-action, and then very likely—for fashion is not fashion unless in extremes—‘ grin and grimace’ will preponderate—But you are *distract*—you are thinking of,”—She paused.

“ Of the singular power,” I replied, “ which attracts to each other such very dissimilar bodies.”

“ As I and the Marchioness ? oh ! I am sublime in her presence ; a cloud-soaring *Improvisatrice* ; never chop words or ellipsify—can’t, won’t, don’t, wouldn’t suit her ; what would become of the frangible vase if struck by the solid Corinthian ?—We are friends as I told you before from our very antipathies ; I was formed of the essence of froth vivified by some chance sun-beam—she was first cast in flint,

and though outwardly softened for human collision, the verve of her primary substance remains."

"A frigid companion," said I.

"As cold as Mont Blanc and more lofty," rejoined Miss Berrington. "But she leaves us; for a week at least; we are beginning to unfetter the pent up *capricios*; I have already given laughter a peep into day-light: we must bury him when she comes back. But *I* think she'll be murdered."

"Murdered!"

"'Tis probable—very—she journeys *incog* to visit some savage recluses far west—she'll be murdered—I dote on a murder!—don't *you*? such food for petrific romance—the title 'A tale of horror founded upon fact!'"

I had been longing for an opportunity to bring in Helen's manuscript; but not being prompt, I lost the advantage.

"Do *you* think the Marchioness stands a *fair* chance of being murdered Mr. Fitzgerald? Are the 'White boys' and 'Right boys' in vocation at present? Have the conscript banditti of Buonaparte joined them?"

I had so little knowledge of the grand political reverses which had for some time engrossed the public mind, that I simply repeated the only familiar word in her last question—"Conscript!"

"Not *Fathers* but *Fusileers*," pursued Miss Berrington; "shooting through a hedge, (a ditch as you call it) shooting at poor Lady Dellival—picture the scene—'Notes for first chapter. Night—moon, dim and watery—clouds murky—a narrow pass between mountains steep and savage, with awful chasms, and strange and sudden windings—thunder—a carriage drawn by panic-stricken horses slowly wends through the ravine—the postilion scowls upwards, his ferocious eye revealing him a party in the impending horror—a whistle heard—the echoes take it up, and ring a peal of whistles—lightning—the carriage is arrested by a rock—the Marchioness puts her head out of the window, and, in a lofty tone, bids the post-boy drive on—the moon retires, the rock will *not* recede—pikes gleam blue, in the blue lightning's flash—awful interval! a band of Shanavests, *sans* shoes and *chose à manger*, swoop

into the pass—‘Miscreants!’ cries the Marchioness, ‘murder me aristocratically!’ A bullet whizzes—she dies without a scream!—Lord Dellival puts on mourning and marries within a month!—Will it do?”

I was forced into a laugh. “Provided you make *yourself* the successor of the luckless heroine.”

“And Marchioness of Dellival,” she promptly added. “What invention you possess; I should never have thought of such a ‘*finis*’—a *nez retroussé* succeeding to majestic aquiline!”

“Is Lord Dellival as stately as his wife?” said I.

“He was; but grief has bowed him—nothing can bow her—He has buried two sons and they were all his children—his health is broken—to see the branches of the family tree propped gallantly, is all he lives for—A brother is now heir presumptive, and he has married some beautiful nobody.”

I started, and looked at her earnestly, but she was evidently uninformed of my connexion with Lord Sanford.

“This circumstance,” pursued Miss Berring-

ton, "obstructs the brilliant climax you contemplated for me. The two *nobodies* might clash; for, although I make a noise, yet I am nobody. Lord Sanford's marriage will form, however, a stirring intercalary chapter for my tale of horror; its announcement was delightfully alarming."

"Indeed," said I.

"Yes; as member of the literary Exclusives Lady Dellival thinks me worth propitiating; we are sometimes *fast* intimates; I was sitting *en boudoir* with her, one morning, and discoursing of my contemplated Irish flitting—to the which I was rather incited by Fielding—when the tidings came, wrapped in superfine envelope—Sanford is politic—among the ciphers he knew the *absolute unit*, and so addressed confession to his *belle-sœur*—it was tardy, for his lapse had taken place some months before; but this delay of its confession involved another *ruse*, as you will discover in the sequel—Ah! I have lost the thread—where was I?"

"In the boudoir."

"True; the letter is unfolded; to human eye her ladyship's mental mercury had never

moved one jot above the freezing point till now : when *her* face changes 'tis an augury of earthquake or eclipse. She did more than turn from pale to red, from red to white ;—she fainted !—I thought the letter had secreted some murderous detonator, so I screamed ‘ fire, fire ! ’ rang for a troop of femmes de chambre, and flew to his lordship, holding the written mischief gingerly, for fear of being blown up. My Lord behaved *en philosophe*, fumed a little in rich asthmatic, digressed to heritor and heritrix, and wrote a prosy lecture. But mark the strategy of Sanford—almost upon the heels of the fulminating epistle came a bulletin, in the Buonapartean style, announcing the birth of a greater babe than the little king of Rome, the destined bearer of quarterings traceable to *real* crowned heads.

“ The Marquis hemmed off a fierce catarrh, smoothed his ruffles, and wrote forthwith to signify a pardon, subjoining a pressing invitation to his town-house—we were then at castle Dellival. But the Marchioness, instead of hastening to welcome the poor stranger, complains of palpitations ! hysteria ! hypochondria !

and volunteers to join my *hocus pocus* party, which had been long enlisted for the land of *alibis*. We were hunting for a *chaperon*, but never thought of such a one—I suspect she does not like a rival near the throne, and undertook this gratuitous protectorship merely to practise the shake of her autocratic sceptre over us, callow younglings, and thus bring her hand in, for ‘the Sanford.’ Now comes her journey to the savage west, and next, in order, comes the murder—a lucky chance for tourists—I’ll change names and dates and work it up into a legend—Are you fond of legends?”

Here was another opening for the manuscript, and one as obvious as if designed. I tried to detach my thoughts from Marion’s new connections, and to enter on the main object of my visit; but my ideas were embroiled. I could not methodize the introduction, so I made a stammering attempt to develop my early admiration of legends—I had been induced—not I, indeed, but another person—to write—a tale—the manuscript was in my possession—and circumstances—reverses—beneficial—profitable—perhaps I had been misinform-

ed—expectations—hopes.—Thus I proceeded coughing, blundering, and blushing; if I was intelligible something independent of my tongue had made me so.

That Miss Berrington should fill up my gaps with the aptest words, and comprehend my puzzled meaning most exactly, was marvellously fortunate; before I had half got through the fog of explanation unexplained, she interrupted me.

“I understand—perfectly—you mean to publish—so do I—suppose we harness donkeys and run together—I have cleared the course already, and can warn you of quicksands—Let us be partners—*will* you?”

Her tone was earnest, but her look was so arch and comical that I half suspected she was laughing at me.

“Come—decide—shall we unite?—form a *belle alliance*—share profit and rebuff—the brunt of criticism, the awful sentence of reviews and magazines?”

The more perplexed I looked, the more she rattled.

“You seem alarmed: you never heard of

such ordeals—you think reviews are only destined for a drill of Tipperary boys, and magazines merely for stores of gunpowder—there you hit the mark—they all conduce to blowing brains out.

She had led me quite beyond my depth—"The writer of this manuscript," said I, struggling to get back to shallow waters"—

"Good," she exclaimed ; "you are not such a tyro as I thought ; all great unknowns speak of themselves in the third person—Still you have much to learn in authorship—'tis the unsafest ship—you'll founder without me."

"I meant to supplicate your aid," said I.

"But I won't be *internuncio*," said Miss Berrington, "I like to be a principal ; bring me the manuscript ; I'll write notes and preface, and slip in a 'mother Hubbard' of my own—we'll share the profits *honestly*—You don't doubt me, do you ?"

"Doubt you Madam !"

"Then leave it all to me—How shall we bring it out ?—'Tales by two interesting young people ;'—perhaps you covet all the glory—and the grief—are you invulnerable ? the critics'

shaft may find a permeable heel—'tis Ossian speaks of the joy of grief isn't it? Ah! Ossian never felt the lash of a Reviewer—that grief has no joy!"

"The critics' shaft," repeated I, striving to clarify a hazy conception of her meaning—"Homer had his critics—and Isocrates—Aristarchus cavilled at—"

"To be sure," ejaculated Miss Berrington, with a slight convulsion of the chest, as if she were laughing inwardly; "and we have modern Aristarchs for modern geniuses—an Areopagus of philanthropic Galenists, self-constituted to check a dangerous endemic. Book-mania rages furiously—not book-reading—but book-writing. In shape of rabid animal it runs through the multitude, miscellaneous in attack—bites literate and illiterate—prince and shoe-maker—no muzzle can coerce the brute—'for ten inspired, ten thousand are possessed'—and unless the critic's caustic were applied, the virus would engender volumes whose weight might overcome the sun's attraction. Fancy our unlucky globe yielding to the Bathos, and ponderous tomes collapsing all around us! Yet this salu-

tary caustic makes one wince—blisters rarely till you are used to it—you had better let me stand the first pinch.”

“But do your critics deal with all alike?” said I.

“You are a *real* innocent,” said Miss Berrington, fixing her inscrutable eyes upon me. “In the first place some scribblers are not worth powder and shot; in the next, who would feel the inward smart if all were meted equally? When wrinkles and gray hairs steal on us, we bear the visitation gracefully, for no one is exempted, save by death, another universal and impartial law; but picture to yourself a bevy of senile damsels afflicted with furrows, rheum, and baldness, while other belles of the same standing flutter before them, with speckless orbs, luxuriant tresses and cheeks of roses—*sans* wrinkle or crow’s foot—wouldn’t it gall a saint?”

“It *is* possible then, that the writer of this manuscript *may* find grace,” said I.

“*Possible*—yes—your weak points will be seared however. Groundlings quiver and give up—the brave go on, but they go on improving—some are fools enough to bluster—they only

draw upon themselves cantharides. You may be of this *genus irritabile*—I am tough as Plattoff—‘bear and forbear’ is my motto—give me the Legend—I’ll be Mother Goose and change it to a golden egg.”

This was exactly what I had been hoping for; yet I felt a proud twinge at finding my poverty guessed at—“Would it be honorable,” said I, “to expose you to—”

“The birch!—quite honorable—I may come in for comfits—Suppose our literary magnates waft ambrosia in a nod—suppose we harmonize with the changeful hues of public taste! say no more; our *Brays* shall run together—if one reach the winning post what matter if the other bolt.—My tale is not yet written, but I have it in my head. Should it suit our pieces to be dove-tailed I’ll do it neatly, and make *you* the hero—will that content you?”

“A halting hero,” I observed, half amused, half piqued; “most unsuited for a race-course.”

She blushed as if memory twitted her, but instantly recovered.—

“Your lameness—’tis nothing, or, if any thing, a grace—Witness the great men who im-

mortalize and have immortalized a blemish. Scott lame—Byron lame—Alexander had a crooked neck—Demosthenes, he stuttered—had not Cato a high shoulder that was hidden by the draping of his toga? Such slight deformity is nothing—merely individualizes, adds a striking feature to the aspect—There's our concrete genius, poet, novelist, orator and statesman—he would give his eyes to limp a little *naturally*—he's too well made—could he but manage a slight fracture 'twould make his fortune; but the puzzle is to break the joint in an interesting way—to make it touching."

Her digression to my ancients had rendered me oblivious; my thoughts had flown in a tangent to Persepolis.—"You mention Scott and Byron with the hero Alexander," I observed, "my memory is treacherous—were they of Macedon, did they combat at the Granicus?"

She blinked and peered at me—"Macedon! the Granicus! have you been exploded from the primary formation to confute geologists by proving that animals existed in their inorganic stratum. Not hear of Walter Scott, whose name will live when Alexander's is forgotten.

Exorcisist of 'one-handed Monks,' 'Bleeding nuns,' and all the rabble host of fiction, I burned half my delectable brochures when I read that gem of fancy—should others follow my example. Scott may prove a *double* of the Saracen incendiary who furnished book-fuel for four thousand baths—What! you a tale-writer and not know 'Waverly!'

"A new author," said I, hardly knowing what I said.

"Pish! a new novel," replied Miss Berrington; "he who has hope of literary fame should 'turn the page' before he 'guide the pen' should

"Leave to the fribble and the fool
To scorn the reasoning of the school—
Be first a critic, then—"

an author if you will—The advice contained in these dictations is beyond all price—You *must* have read 'Familiar epistles?'

"Trajan's to Pliny?" stammered I.

She treated me to a look, which said as plainly as any thing could say, "what a noodle!"

I felt as angry as disconcerted—"Miss Berrington," said I, rising, "I have told you that

I make no pretension to the name of author; 'tis *you* have dubbed me—may I remind you of the letter from my friend and thank you for this audience?"

"Which being interpreted means, 'I'm very tired of you,' she retorted, "But Miss Berrington is too politic to give up a prize: I want some hints for my 'Social classes of the Irish,' a work I have in contemplation—and I want to make my fortune by that manuscript of yours. I should have behaved better had you been more generous, though, *inter-nos*, I'm not, myself, a whit inclined to liberality—still I am *very* conscientious—you shall have an honest dividend—not a fraction more. I have hopes this work of yours will *take*: originals beget originals. *May* I reckon on our partnership? *shall* we enter hand in hand into posterity?"

"I am only too much honored, Madam, by the interest"—

"I take in my own cause, ah! Fielding will tell you what a jew I am—you shall have his letter when you bring the manuscript—but but mind—I'll not be *Madam'd*."

"Is my friend well?" said I—

"Two months ago he was not dead," replied Miss Berrington, musing, "I have not seen him since my visit to Castle Dellival—therefore his letter bears a lazy date."

"Not dead," I repeated, "he is not, I hope, in danger?"

"Only of being canonized"—she replied ;—a scuffle outside the door broke off our conversation.

CHAPTER V.

Will you Ma'am come and drink *say* ?

Fal lal la la ladadee

All in the family way—

Fal lal la la ladadee.

Old Song.

“ I AM positive it is *my* insect,” said Miss Berrington, “ I recognize the *hum.* Papilio ! Papilio ! ”

Little Boots entered—half of him at least, the other half was in the gripe of Phil, who suffered himself however to be dragged into the presence by degrees.

“ What is it ? ” cried Miss Berrington ;
“ what bur has fastened on you ? ”

Papilio, reddening and spluttering, labored to bring out evidence; Phil, at sight of a lady, relaxed his hold, scraped his foot, and bobbed genteelly—"I knowed it," he ejaculated, facing Boots with a flourish of his fist; "I knowed *himself* was here—didn't I spy you all the way down Tuckey-street, comin' up the steps here Sir, an hour ago? That jim-crack kept denyin' me, but I thumped it out of him.—There! *hould* your tongue, poor little thing," he added, demurely clapping his hand upon the mouth of Boots. "Don't shew your ign'rance, sure no one *understand* you!"

"Your valet, I presume," said Miss Berrington.

I was nearly as irate as Boots. "What do you want?" said I.

"'Tisn't I want you, sure; 'tis Miss Quinny," retorted Phil; "she's home from Sunday's Well—tearin' mad wid both of us; the turbot's lost!"

"That gorgeous head-dress!" exclaimed Miss Berrington, clasping her hands—"lost!"

"For good an' all!" said Phil. "Sure I hadn't a hand in it! Miss Kelaher, the milliner,

wanted to twig the *morul* of it just for Mrs. Horrigan; I took a short cut through the fish market—the string unties—the hand-box comes in two—the turbot tumbles out—Peg Plaice the clea-boy* claps it on her head an' roona away wid it!"

"Horrible," cried Miss Berrington, "most horrible!"

"Miss Quinny said so too Ma'am; she flew right round an' round the room for rage."

"Stand there one moment till I pencil you," said Miss Berrington taking up a note-book; "what's your name child?"

"Philly Nabbs sure."

"Nabbs! capital! I *do* so wish to draw your likeness."

"Lanty can draw any thing," said Phil.

"And who is Lanty?"

"The masther's horse, the misthisses horse, Miss Quinny's horse."

"A joint-stock nag!—And who is Miss Quinny?"

"The one that wears the spangles sure—the

* Cleave-boy—market boy.

ould one—she's comin' here—it slipped out o' me, *unknownst*, that Master Walter had a hand in tyin' up the bandbox;—' I'll make him pay for it,' siz she,—lookin' fit to be tied herself,—' where is he then,' siz she, ' the ninny !' ' He went into Macdowel's an hour ago,' siz I, ' but I suppose he's gone again,' siz I—Haith here she be !"

Phil slipped behind Papilio. Quinilla's voice, in shrill soprano, sent a chill panic through my frame; my sometime guide was marshalling the way—" Thank'ee my good girl, *that'll do*," said Quinny—" Why then Watty Sir, what in the wide world made you"—She was now inside the door.

" I thank you for the honor of this visit," said Miss Berrington, smilingly approaching our cousin; " pray who have I the honor of addressing?"

" Miss O'Toole Ma'am," said Quinilla, curtsying in the most prepossessing style, and looking sweetly—" I'm sure I beg a thousand pardons—Helen told me, Walter, that probably you were with a friend of Mr. Fielding's, but I'm sure I had no notion—very much *obleegeed*

indeed Ma'am—Foreign manners after all are so *shuperior*."—This was said as if intended for a whisper.

She took the chair Miss Berrington presented—I could as soon have moved mount Athos as myself—Quinilla meantime hemmed and winked, and winked and hemmed; at last I understood her, and introduced Miss Berrington, who made her compliments with the epigrammatic ease of Sanford.

"One always finds oneself at home in good society, Walter," said Quinilla, in another audible whisper; "What a *very* nice young *ooman*!"

"You look fatigued," said Miss Berrington, "Papilio!" she nodded. Boots withdrew, Phil sticking to his girdle.

"Only the morning's recreation," replied our cousin—"We breakfasted at Sunday's Well, and had a little hop—I dare say I look quite a figure!"

"A figure one would not willingly forget," said Miss Berrington.

Quinilla simpered, surveying amicably her nankin boots fronted with green leather.

"Pray Miss Berrington do you make any

stay in the city? My friends the Bullocks would be delighted to hire a lodging for you if you don't *shoot* yourself; they keep a jaunting-car—you'd like a drive upon the Glenmire road, or round the ring, or may be you'd wish to see the wax-work; Miss *Cordy* stabbing *Maraw* is fine—*very* fine!"

Excuses were made graciously by Miss Berrington—She had promised to join her fellow-tourists after noon—They left Cork to-morrow.

Papilio entered with refreshments; Miss Berrington whispered to her page, and poured out wine.

"How attentive!" said Quinilla, jogging me; "I'm sure *I* never witnessed such attention—what an air of style!" She sipped her wine: discreetly poking out her little finger, which displayed a ring of *real mock*.

"I suppose Miss Berrington you are going to see Blarney; there's a famous kissing stone, stood a siege by Cromwell—and the ovens; there's a factory for making paper table-cloaths! and Dunscombe's wood, an elegant thing—and Carrigrohan Castle, built by the Phenicians—I have all the city lions at my fingers' ends you

see.—You ought to stay another day or two. There's Cove, and Spike—Cork harbour, next to Naples—The new barracks, beautiful! but the water's bad—Passage is a very pretty place, we had lodgings there one summer, and balls upon the beach—Monkstown too, a religious edifice—Astley's circus is shut up, but the theatre in George's street is open—Young's sweet in Hamlet! I have a passion for the stage; and a talent for it too, my brother says."

"I thought so," said Miss Berrington gravely; "your lineaments are of the Kemble tournure—Genius has always a distinctive trait."

Quinilla wriggled with delight. "I thought I looked quite shockingly this morning for"—A lucky chime broke off the explanation—"Bless me! two o'clock! and I hurried home from Sunday's Well o' purpose to recruit myself for the hop to-night. But such agreeable company—quite in my own way—Come Watty love."

After a profusion of farewells she was departing, followed by bewildered me, when a sudden thought arrested her. She turned to Miss Berrington with a supplicating smirk—

"Pray ma'am are you engaged to-night? we have a little *rout*, just to practise our quadrilles for winter balls. I could promise you some music much above the common—Cork's famous for good ears—'tisn't without reason that there's harps upon our halfpennies—but our violin-shello is gone to Dublin, and our flute has a bad cold; Monimia Bullock is quite husky—she's a *second Siren*—so we prorogued our Phil-harmonics."

She paused and looked beseechingly. To my amazement and dismay, Miss Berrington gave unhesitating assent.

Quinilla was in ecstasies. "And Watty can come for you,"—she shot me a knowing wink; "and you can come in a high gown—so don't unpack. That gipsy hat is the tastiest thing! how I'd like the pattern!—sweet!"

Miss Berrington seemed to enjoy my embarrassment: she bent to us with such a mischievous grace—it was inhuman!—I never descended stairs so rapidly. Phil emerged from a corner, with a monstrous piece of cake, which had caused an armistice between him and Boots.

"Is she roarin' mad intirely?" said the boy,

gaping after Quinilla, who hopped down the steps and frisked across the Mall, waving her feathers playfully for me to follow—her hat that day was French, tapering like a fir-cone. I lingered to escape her and to observe Lady Dellival, who was descending the staircase, while a servant let down the step of a post-chaise which stood at the door. The Marchioness tottered on the ill-constructed step, and I instinctively sprang to support her; she grasped my arm—I assisted her into the vehicle and presented a handkerchief that had fallen on the pavement. Imagine my consternation—she threw me a shilling! I think I should have flung it back, but in a moment it was caught up and popped between the teeth of ‘Beauty,’ who had dodged me closely.

My heart swelled: I never before had felt an access of real fury. After lavishing the bitterest reproaches on Phil, who had been in no way accessory to this indignity, I slunk home, and stole up to my attic: vexation had given me head-ache; and for exhaustion of my ill-humour I minuted my conversation with Miss Berrington.

I had finished when Helen put in her enquiring face, with an eager, "Well Walter?" I pointed to the diary—she read it rapidly, ejaculating at intervals—"How fortunate!—about to publish—what! coming here this evening!"

She laid down the journal, and stood for some time lost in thought—I was too moody to disturb her.

"Is she very fascinating?" enquired Helen at last.

"Fielding may think her fascinating Helen—I don't—I wish he had not forced me to this visit—I never felt so humbled in my life."

"Humbled!" repeated Helen, trying to smile, though her tears were fast gathering—"Tis a false shame that oppresses you—what have we to do with pride?—we are poor, and those we love are poor—Is it humbling to give them comfort? to struggle for independence?"

Her mild upbraiding look turned my indignation against myself; I requested her to prepare the manuscript, and promised to present it to Miss Berrington.

Quinilla's description of the London lady had quickened the pulses of the family : the turban, after one truly affecting apostrophe, was forgotten—curiosity was rife, and exhilaration overflowed at the prospect of transfixing the Whelpleys and Doghertys with the sight of a *real* Englishwoman. The intended dry drum—which suggested merely cake and wine—expanded into a *petit souper*—So many 'poor dear souls,' would be affronted if they were not invited, that every soul they knew was invited, "except one poor thing," said Dionysius, "who is so *dreadful* ungentee!" Mrs. Bullock tramped up and down the stairs, jingling her keys, beseeching Mr. B. to make punch, to go to market, and to send his wig to Barry's to be dressed; he looked "so like a Goth!"

Helen was requested to give up the children—there were so many picture-dusters wanted—the statues on the landing looked abominable—Minerva's nose was ruined—little Timotheus had a knack at cobbling plaster-work. "The lustres too would like a *lick*," said Katy, who was always sent for in cases of extremity;

directress of the more recondite confections.

Slauveen stole up to us, to hint that his official functions would upset a common mind. Suppers were much more serious than dry drums; Mrs. Bullock would fall into convulsions unless there were a dish for every guest; he was to forage for sheeps' tongues, spiced beef, collared pig, and other interesting solids. The Vulcan kitchen-range could *accommodate* only a couple o' ducks, so Mrs. Green's *accommodated* a couple o' chickens, and Breesthough, luckless brute! was cheated of his evening gambol with Phil Nabbs, and chucked into the dog-wheel.

But heads spun round as well as spits, the wildest dance was sliding into fashion; *valtz*, Monimia called it. Mrs. Bullock called it whirligig—The mere thought of it induced vertigo: poor Mr. B. used to purse his lips, and ask suspiciously, whether it might be virtuous.

This dizzying roundelay was now in practice; alternating with *queue de chat*, and other fantastic evolutions. The efforts Dion made were

feverish ; he *would* perform with Monimia just one round in the attic to regale me—"Clever creature !" sighed our cousin, as she surveyed her whirling friend. "What a pity she can't manage '*Spirits* of my sainted sire !'"

At length the hour drew near which the household in solemn synod had decided was proper for my embassy ; Helen had brushed my coat, refreshed my waistcoat, and forced my hat from some of its deformities ; I hid the manuscript in my vest, and with throbbing heart awaited orders.

"Now Watty," said Quinilla, flourishing full dressed into my attic ; "the room is filling ; you may go ; there's that old show Miss Hinch in a green gauze bandeau and a green poplin gown, with her face as red as a brick, just like a setting sun in a shrubbery ; such a fright !"

CHAPTER VI.

Affabilitie is of wounderfull efficacye in procuring love.... Where a man is facile or easy to be spoken unto...where a man speaketh courteysly, with a sweet speach or countenance; whereby the hearers (as it were with a delicate odour) be refreshed and allured to love him, in whome is thys most delectable qualitie.

Sir T. Egot.

MISS BERRINGTON received me in the same frank, lively manner as before; thanked me for the manuscript as if I had conferred a signal favour; gave me Fielding's letter, and rallied me on my unnational inhospitality. "But for the band-box adventure I should not have made acquaintance with your family," she observed.

My excuse was given readily and even with elation—I was only tutor in the Bullock family.

“How lucky!” said Miss Berrington—
“We can then discuss them unreservedly—
The O’Toole surpasses hope—what a variety
for my social classes.”

“She is the sister of a person I revere,”
said I.

“Should that detract from the admiration
she inspires?—I was longing for such a *speci-*
ment (as our guide of Glendalough expresses it)
of unadulterated ore. I have met with as fine
gentlemen and high-bred ladies in Ireland, as
in any land—the aristocratic airs of every
country verge to a common centre—but educa-
tion disguises your grand aboriginal qualities,
brings you to the monotonous level of other
educated people; state apartments and court
fustian, savor of the hum-drum—I want to peep
into the *corps de logis*, to catch a view of the
superb grotesque—are all the *animali parlanti*
genuine?—are they all of the same racy
quality?”

“The Bullocks are a worthy family,” said I,

"though not perhaps of that high-breeding which would suit the intimates of Lady Dellival."

"Thank Heaven!—I am sick of the grand reception-tone, and long to hear the tone of nature."

"Then you must journey to the 'savage west,' " said I.

"And so I will, and make acquaintance with your Boors and Brehons—But first I'll go with you to my appointment—my carriage waits—my *chaussure* is not quite pedestrian."

I had not before remarked that the fashion of her dress was changed, though conscious that something had embellished her—It might be that the discarding of the 'gipsy hat' had given to view a fine broad forehead, from which the hair was drawn completely, and fastened back *en Cleoputre*. I thought upon Quinilla's triple tier of bows, and gauze, and drooping lilacs, surmounting little ringlets of baked hair, resembling the screw-like shavings dangling from a summer fire-place. The head before me was set off, only, by that exquisite good taste which suits the *coiffure* to the style of feature.

"Now," said Miss Berrington, when we were seated in a handsome travelling chariot, "*revenons a nos boeufs*"—the Bullocks—give me a hint of their collective attributes, their aggregate demeanour."

I shook my head somewhat rebukefully.

"Ho! I understand. They must be sifted separately—they have nothing distinctive as a tribe—then let us go back to Quinny—what delightful *abbreviature*! I have a tenderness for contractions and diminutives myself—they domesticate—lead people from the *grand pas* of ceremony to the light pace of friendly intercourse: but she outdoes me; I never should have thought of familiarizing into *Watty*, the thrilling name of Walter—a name associated with splendid deeds, with Marmion and the Minstrel—But I forgot—you scorn the epopée of modern era."

"Circumstances formed my taste," said I, "nor will I call them unpropitious—my ignorance of modern literature as of artificial customs may be pardoned, on the plea of absolute seclusion even from my infancy. A few months

back I was a dweller of the 'savage west' where"
—The carriage stopped.

"What a pity," ejaculated Miss Berrington, "I began to feel so interested! Is there a crypt in that cyclopean edifice where I may hear the rest?"

We were opposite the Vulcan—the hall-door flew wide, and Slauveen, with a strut no fugleman could excel, ushered us up stairs. Miss Berrington's lynx eyes were active; even the patching of Minerva's nose did not escape her—I bowed when we reached the landing, and wished her a good evening. "What! enter a 'drawing-room *sans cavalier*!" she exclaimed, linking my arm with hers—not I indeed!"

There was no time for remonstrance—Slauveen twitched away my hat: the hum of many voices broke upon me; we were announced sonorously, and I found myself, in thread-bare habit and stout *high-lows*, advancing up a room tapestried with living figures, an elegant young woman leaning on my arm.

In a moment we were hemmed in by the Bullocks and Quinilla.—

“Dionysius why, a *cheer*!—a *cheer* why Dionysius”—Five chairs were pushed against Miss Berrington—She released me, and I slid into a place which a good natured little lady in sky blue drapery, made for me, by drawing closer to her neighbour—I need not have been so frightened—nobody was looking at me.

For some time I heard nothing, I saw nothing distinctly—day-light was not yet excluded—the setting sun poured his blinding rays into the room; there was a flashing and hurtling of forms and sounds and colors. To recover my senses I closed my eyes—The first object they opened on, was Mr. Bullock presented by Quinilla and bowing to his English guest—The little gentleman had never looked so spruce and lively; his grey eyes twinkled fervently; his queue, ‘small by degrees and beautifully less,’ dangled to his waist; his bright copper buckles glittered like the bellows’ nose that shone outside the window; his broad-skirted coat (a satire on the scanty skirts of the younger Dionysius) was an oil and mustard mixture, adorned with buttons huge as those our glenboys brought from Ballygobbin. Beside him

stood a statelier form, draped in ruby velvet—what a cap she wore!

“And this is Mrs. Bullock,” said Quinilla, her verbal efforts combating a joyous giggle; “and here’s Monimia.” Monimia, in despite of bugles and gold bands, looked handsome. “Dionysius! where *are* you Dionysius?”

“Why here I’m here,” cried Dion, sinking his head and suffering his chin gently to touch his ample chitterling.

“And here’s Timotheus too,” said Quinny. “The other children are too young—Timotheus is as good a waiter as Patricius—hold up your head Timotheus, turn out your toes Sir—”

Miss Berrington received *the introduced* with a pleased and earnest notice which made each think himself appreciated—How captivating is affability! that tone of interest and complaisance which flatters us into self-approval and, whether sincere or not, possesses an indescribable charm when addressed to us by those we look upon as our superiors—The dignified reserve of Madame Wallenberg was revolting to our cousin—the high-bred German lady was disgusted with frivolities—the high-bred Eng-

lish lady (for with all her eccentricities Miss Berrington bore the stamp distinctive of high-breeding) was delighted with every novelty of character how farcical soever: she received the strenuous civilities of Miss O'Toole with untired complacency, disguising her incidental satire with the mask of compliment. In proportion therefore, as the Baroness had been censured by our cousin was Miss Berrington extolled. Monimia, Dion, and Mrs. Bullock joined in these loudly whispered plaudits; Dion indeed declared, upon his word an' honor she beat Miss McCarthy hollow.

"Miss McCarthy!" exclaimed Mr. B.—bowing politely as his lady sneezed, "Miss McCarthy! pooh!"

Monimia now suggested it would be friendly to introduce the *company*—every one was anxious for some mark of notice from the cynosure; and so Miss McCarthy, Mr. McCarthy, the three Miss Dogherty's, Master Dicky Dogherty the two Miss Moriartys, their papa, Miss Hinch, five Mr. Hurleys, a troop of Raffertys, a regiment of Riordans, and four old ladies and one old gentleman—destined for the snug

cassino-set and cutter-in of the little room behind the shop—were each presented in rotation ; last of all was handed up my blushing neighbour, wreathed in roses, and looking like a little fat Arcadian Shepherdess embellishing a frontispiece—Miss Philly Horrigan—I thought it my bounden duty, as Miss Philly had been so civil, to march along with her, hoping some lucky chance would clear a passage to the door ; but Miss Berrington maliciously nodded me into a chair beside her. I was longing to read Fielding's letter but dared not disobey, for her raillery, though disguised to others, was played off, openly, on me.

"What, still in the clouds with Aristophanes !" she exclaimed—"I have been observing you."

"Aristophanes !" said Dion, "don't you mean *nubes* ? I'm in that—'tis plaguy hard !"

"On Mr. Fitzgerald," added Miss Berrington.

"Not at all," said Dion, "Mr. Fitzgerald can read Latin as fast as you read English why !"

"Indeed !—knowledge progresses lamentably : talent will soon be worthless ; what every one has, no one cares for."

"I think, myself, that dancing will carry the day," said Dion; "in Ireland at any rate."

"You mean *rope* dancing," said Miss Berrington.

"Rope dancing! *hang* it no," said Dionysius, "not at all—I mean—"

"Cicero is a very pretty book don't you think Ma'am?" said Mrs. Bullock, who had gathered from me that Miss Berrington was a literary person.

"Very indeed," said Miss Berrington, impressively, "and Thucydides! how sweetly he describes the plague of Athens! but you prefer it may be that passage in Confucius, on filial—"

"Monimia Monimia come here come here," interrupted Mrs. Bullock. "Pray Mr. Fitzgerald, *will* you give Monimia *your* place? she'll think it such a treat you know to talk the classics."

I arose; Mrs. Bullock leaned on me, and led me to her mate—"We'll just leave them to get into the marrow of it," she whispered—"For my part Mr. B. she *poses* me—so very literary—quite a poetess!"

"Gracious!" ejaculated Mr. B. "Literary!—a poetess!—I thought you told me she was a gentlewoman."

"Pray hold your tongue and don't expose yourself," said Mrs. Bullock; "a lady, now a days, not literary, is not a gentlewoman."

Quinilla meantime was fluttering about, issuing the word of command, as if mistress of the revels—"Take the silver bread-basket Timotheus dear; tea is coming in—hand the plum-cake about my man—Boland didn't forget the Shrewsburys I hope—Patricius, draw the curtains—bring in the wax candles."

"How well she manages," observed Mrs. Bullock. "So clear in all her orders—well for us we have her!"

So the bellows were shut out and candles brought in. Tea went its rounds, and little Timotheus, with a basket that at once established Irish hospitality. "None of your *finican* slices," said one of the cassino junto, pouncing on the luscious freight, "but handsome, substantial wedges—well!—I never saw!—Boland is the *sweetest* pastrycook!—You are so abstemious ma'am," addressing Miss Berrington;

"take this bit; do you sing ma'am?—the three Miss Whelpleys sing 'merrily every bosom bounces' most beautifully—or may be you play commerce?"

"Play cards indeed!" said Dionysius, coloring; "she'll dance—wo'n't you dance with me Miss Berrington?"

"Certainly I hope to have that pleasure."

There was a miraculous brightening of my pupil's countenance. "The Miss Dogherty's don't know Quadrilles," he added, "so we must have a country-dance or two."

"As many as you please; a country-dance in autumn is so refreshing!"

"Sweet creature!" murmured the Miss Doghertys.

I had been stealing towards the door and was preparing for a dart; I had no one to pass but Mr. B. who was cooling his tea by pouring it from cup to saucer.

"Pray tell Mr. Fitzgerald I wish to speak with him."

I heard the order and gave up escape, returning fearfully to my tormentor.

"But for you," said Dionysius, gazing de-

voutly at Miss Berrington, "we should not have had Mr. Fitzgerald to-night; he is always writing exercises; it makes us quite melancholy to see him look so moped and miserable."

"He is not then a stern task-master?"

"Stern!—he's the mildest person in the world!" said Dionysius warmly—"I could never learn at all before he taught me—stern! he has the patience of a saint."

Miss Berrington looked at him with a changed expression—"You are a zealous and a generous friend; I wish *I* had such an advocate."

"Nonsense!" said Dionysius, "*you* can never want an advocate."

A slight flush overspread the lady's face; she turned to me hastily and whispered—"I am rebuked—the most refined compliment could not have struck more home—surely the first knight-errant must have been an Irishman."

I was on the point of saying, "Marion will vouch for that." What saddening associations rushed in with the thought!—Utterly forgetful I flung my arm across the chair, leaned my head on it and was transported to our study in the distant west—Marion and Helen pored

over their favorite tomes ; aunt plied her stocking needle ; my uncle took notes for a translation of Homer which he had long contemplated—I heaved a profound sigh, and stared vacantly around—the scraping of a fiddle had brought back my alienated senses.

“ You are ill, your head aches,” said Monimia, taking my hand ; “ the room is very warm, stand outside the door for a minute or two.”

“ Do,” said Dion ; “ come to us again though.”

“ He worries himself too much with Dionysius,” said Mrs. Bullock.

“ The poor lad is as white as chalk,” said Mr. B. “ he *shall not* be pestered with lessons all day ; by the Law-Harry he sha’n’t.”

I was an object of general solicitude ; every one was full of pity—every one recommended some unfailing specific. I was conscious of no ailment save that *tremor cordis* which I had no hope of losing ; nevertheless I was glad to be released.

Miss Berrington followed me to the door.—“ You forsake me, most unknighly cavalier. Farewell—I leave Cork at day-break—’Tis the

plaint of that vexed Cremona that afflicts you, is it not?" she whispered—"Still to be the object of such honest sympathies is comforting. Take this as the result of my observations, I wish I were an Irishwoman."

CHAPTER VII.

Musicians and dancers, take some truce
With these your pleasing labours ; for great use
As much weariness as perfection brings.

Donne.

KATY, Slauveen, and the Vulcan cook were on the landing, peeping at the company ; I asked for a candle, and ascended to my three-pair-stair apartment. As I passed the school-room a low solemn murmur reached me—There was something inexpressibly composing, after the din and bustle of the drawing-room, in the soft hum of Helen's voice leading the children's in evening prayer—I lingered for a moment—
“ Her little charge will be soon dismissed to

bed," thought I: "we can discuss matters as we walk home."

I shut myself into my lecture-room, and opened Fielding's letter; it was shorter than usual, containing little more than a request, singular, because emphatically urged. "You have never," he wrote, "disclosed to me the circumstances of your descent; until lately I was myself unequal to enter on the subject, but I now feel an irrepressible desire to learn them—do not, I beseech you, disappoint me—I know you keep a journal; let me have such parts as bear upon the point I have so much at heart. Miss Berrington will take charge of a deposit I shall hold sacred, and return to you unseen but by myself."

Independent of the feeling which made it almost impossible for me to refuse a request from Fielding, the leaven of pride, fermented by the sarcasms of Miss Berrington, made me not averse to a disclosure that would prove our claim, though not to happy, yet to high descent. I addressed a few lines to my friend, and hastily subtracting from my diary the sheets written since our residence in Cork, I

placed the remainder in envelope with my letter, sealed and directed it—But how make Miss Berrington aware of the second voluminous deposit that awaited her? I had a horror of again encountering the blaze of so many eyes, yet I was scrupulous of entrusting my packet to a servant. For a moment I fluctuated, and the next descended the stairs with a hope that some fortunate chance might befriend me.

“Two fiddles and a dulcimer,” drowned the creaking of my shoes—the before-mentioned peepers were still reconnoitring, so I leaned over the baluster above them, awaiting the conclusion of the dance—The notes of admiration beneath me were sometimes louder than the fiddle notes.

“Whatever heads may do,” said Katy, “Irish heels flogs English ones—Look at Miss Quinny’s *intricate* toes! her *genus* lies that way.”

“In counthry dances,” said Slauveen, “but look at her in them *quadroons*; yawing like Bill Driscol’s wherry in a swell.”

“But how beautiful she throws her toe out,”

returned Katy, "watch her sinking step—Mr. McCarthy's eyes are glued upon her."

"In my mind," quoth the Vulcan cook, "next to Miss Monimia, Miss Philly Horrigan flogs the room; she's *dead* genteel."

"Too bungy," remarked Katy.

"Well done, Master Dionysius!" cried Slauveen, "what a caper! The foreign lady looks enchanted."

"She's a smart young lady too," said Katy; "but her dress ruins her; *all* white looks so *main*, Miss Quinilla's white an' coquelicoo takes the shine from her entirely."

"'Tis allurin'! puts one in mind of a cracked lobster," quoth the cook, "Hush! spake *asy*—don't you hear the music stop?"

There was a buzz of merry voices; the dancers filled up the door-way; the servants decamped, and their places were taken by Dionysius, Quinilla, and Miss Berrington.

"I never was so hot in all my life!" said Quinilla, "my hair is *out*!—Fan your partner, can't you Dionysius!" Miss Berrington really looked exhausted.

"Mr. McCarthy must be wondering where

I am ;” resumed our cousin ; “ are you engaged for the next quadrille, Miss Berrington ? I’m sure I hope I haven’t promised twenty !”

“ I would rather not dance the next,” replied Miss Berrington.

“ I am tired too,” said Dion.

“ You tired Dionysius !—*you* !—but you *must* ask Miss McCarthy.”

Mrs. Bullock now emerged —“ Dionysius, dear—there’s poor Miss McCarthy among the wall-flowers ; you *must* ask her you know ; she looks quite wo-begone ; Mr. Hurley is hunting for Miss Berrington.”

Dion was led off, *à contre cœur*, between his mother and Quinilla. The ‘vexed cremonas’ again struck up.

I was hastening to address Miss Berrington, when the soft hand of a child arrested me—It was Lydia Bullock—“ Will you call Timotheus, Mr. Fitzgerald ? no one hears our bell—Ah ! that lady there will call him.” The child ran down stairs to Miss Berrington—“ Will you tell Timotheus Helen wants him ?”

“ Come with me then my dear.”

"No, no," said Livia: "Helen would be sorry—she says we ought to be in bed."

"And who is Helen? your sister?"

"No; Mr. Fitzgerald's sister—she teaches us—don't you know *our* Helen?"

"I should like to know her."

"Then you must make haste—she is going home—come."

"But she may be angry—"

"Helen is never angry."

"And will you introduce me? I am Miss Berrington."

"The English lady! the lady every one came to look at!—oh Helen will like to see you too—and Julius—and Diana—make haste."—She was drawing Miss Berrington up stairs while she prattled.

I debated whether I should prevent this visit or prepare my sister for it—the moment for either was lost by my delay. Just as I reached the school-room door, Livia, who pursued me closely, pushed it in, exclaiming—"Here's the great lady! the English lady come to see us!"

Miss Berrington drew back, turning on me eyes expressive of astonishment—Helen's arm was thrown round one of the children, who leaned against her half asleep—Julius had mounted her chair to play with the long tresses from which he had drawn the comb that usually confined them—lights burned dimly on a table—the window was thrown open, and an autumn moon shone brilliantly above the blue slate roofings of the houses opposite.

"Come in," said Livia, "Helen will *not* be angry ; come in."

"Pray forgive—forgive—this intrusion," said Miss Berrington, slowly entering.

Helen had started from the children : her innate courtesy subdued the tremors of surprise and diffidence. Miss Berrington's confusion was more apparent ; she took the chair my sister offered, but her *comicus* had left her.

"Won't you say something for me, Mr. Fitzgerald?—I was so harassed by noise and heat—the prospect of a room to breathe in—of—of—"

"Indeed I am glad to see you," said Helen, "to thank you for your kindness to my brother

—We are not accustomed to mix in society, else I should have met you with the family; but this opportunity of thanking you is very grateful to me.”

“Miss Berrington’s eyes were riveted on my sister’s face—“If you wish me to feel at ease you will not mention thanks.”

“Then I will not,” said Helen.

“There!” cried Livia, “I told you she would not be angry.”

How speedily a child consummates an intimacy; Livia placed Miss Berrington’s hand in Helen’s;—the laugh her earnestness excited established familiarity.—A servant entered for the children—I feared a more effectual interruption, and while Helen successively dismissed her little pupils, I hastily informed Miss Berrington of the second bulky packet that awaited her.

“’I’ll prent it,” said she archly; “’a chiel’s amang you takin’ notes.”

“It is for Fielding,” I observed.

“Fielding!” said Miss Berrington, with sudden earnestness of manner;—“What a man!—and what a pity that he was born a

thousand years too soon!—the time is out of joint for such a man.”

I dared not follow up the topic before Helen, yet I dived in vain for a less exciting subject—Miss Berrington after a thoughtful pause resumed.

“To serve his fellow-creatures is all he seems to live for—it is only at long intervals such men spring up.—He is now endeavouring to ameliorate the heaviest affliction which ‘humanity can bear and live’—abolishing the fetter and the lash by which the Pariahs of our hemisphere are tortured; restoring to the pale of brother-hood those poor aliens too long obliterated from our sympathies—The scant dole of charity awarded to the lunatic is widening—Fielding emulates the mercy of him who took the dark in spirit by the hand and lifted him up.”

It is impossible to describe my feelings. Helen had turned from the children, and was listening with breathless interest.

“His father,” continued Miss Berrington, “is as earnest a philanthropist, the organizer of Samaritan societies; a man of extraordinary benevolence, but a humorist. Fielding, on the

contrary, was always serious ; he is now grave —It is whispered that he has formed some unfortunate attachment ; I do not credit the report—a man like that to be refused ! or, more improbable still, to love unworthily !—yet Sir William Fielding is so anxious to see him married that—Ah little one ! would you go without farewell ?” she added, suddenly breaking off to address Livia, who lingered behind the other children, probably anticipating this notice. The child bade good bye with abundance of caresses, and then with wayward fondness clung to Helen, entreating for a *tiny* moment longer, just until Timotheus should be summoned—I rejoiced at the interruption !

“ There is a genuine warm-heartedness in this family,” said Miss Berrington, “ worth all the factitious conventionalities of pompous circles ; their staple element is certainly good-nature, which, notwithstanding my lamentable deficiency in that prime quality, I can estimate ; I do not remember ever having been guilty of a kind act—it isn’t in me.”

“ You are not telling truth,” said Livia, shaking her little head.

Miss Berrington laughed, yet looked discon-

certed. "Is she most shrewd or complimentary Mr. Fitzgerald? The Irish have a plausible idiom combining and disguising the extremes of sincerity and flattery, have they not? a specious varnish distilled from that cabalistic cairn I kissed to-day."

"Miss Berrington could gloss her raillery before she saluted the Blarney stone," said I.

"Ho! you are indignant for your compatriots—unjustly—the memory of their droll *insouciance* will be my care-dispeller—an antidote to dulness. There is a buoyancy in their very accent, a point, a raciness, which I might as well attempt to gild a sun-beam as to pencil without your assistance. Have you informed your sister of our '*belle alliance*'?—but perhaps she discountenances imaginative compositions."

"I have loved them from my cradle," said Helen! "they are linked with the dear credulities of childhood, when the spirit of young wonder was awakened by nursery traditions; but may they not be directed to forward some moral end, to illustrate some truth of pure philosophy?"

"Truly may they," replied Miss Berrington thoughtfully; "fiction is one of the roads by which we reach the understanding of a great mass of our fellow creatures. Those who would reject instruction in a treatise will imbibe it freely, in a tale; therefore it is essential that we purify from dross, and elevate above simple prettinesses the mode of such instruction."

Timotheus at this moment burst into the room, proclaiming that every one was looking for the English lady.

"Must I go?" exclaimed Miss Berrington, "must I leave this cool delicious corner? 'Let me fall to such perusal of its face as I would draw it'."

She looked around the little chamber: it was remarkable for nothing but propriety, and a total absence of that pretension to the false *recherche* which the 'drawing room displayed. "Just too," she added, "as I was about to ask you for the sequel of your story; you left off *you know* at, 'I was a dweller of the savage west'—Mercy! I think I hear the pastoral accent of Miss Philly Horrigan!"

It was the servant who had returned for the

children. Our versatile visitor again digressed, gazing at Helen, who was stooping to comply with Livia's request for one more *last* kiss.—“Fielding told me the Irish foreheads were well furnished—the furniture wants *french polish* perhaps—a rubbing up—but such a head as that!” she whispered, “such a Jephtha's daughter sort of head—What do you deserve for not informing me you had such a pencilling as that upon your canvass—‘soft, modest, melancholy,’—and yet I have seen an outline—where?—an outline which resembles it—a type—can you assist me?—where could I have met with such a head!”

“You have named Jephtha's daughter,” I replied, with forced composure.

“Well—true—I *have* seen a painting of the Jewish maiden; still there is a floating, living somebody—Hark!—the Philistines!”

A loud and wonderfully sustained peal of laughter heralded Quinilla. “Ho-ho-ho, so here you are so snug—after hunting from hole to corner, here you are! Helen not gone home yet!—well; miracles will never cease! and

Watty !—you have bewitched the house Miss Berrington—Here's Dionysius in the dumps—come in *Di*—sure she's found at last—the Mc Carthys will be up directly."

"I retreat to save you from a siege;" whispered Miss Berrington.

"You have had such a loss!" exclaimed Quinilla, "*Di* and Monimia have been waltzing."

"Will you waltz with me, Miss Berrington?" said Dionysius, humbly.

"I never waltz," was the reply.

"Such a loss!" resumed Quinilla, "and poor dear Mrs. Richard Horrigan has had such a loss!—lost a rubber of five by her partner's keeping the last ace!—a shocking slip—But the worst of all was, that relic of old decency, Miss Biddy Hinch, made *such* a sweep!—poor Mrs. Richard's groan was quite affecting!"

A hurricane of voice now was wafted upwards—"What's that!—They can't be going to supper, sure!—the frosted cake's not come! nor the spun sugar—'tis some mistake—I promised to dance the supper-set with Mr. McCar-

thy—*Di* put Miss Berrington in the middle of the table, opposite the pyramid—Come, Dionysius, come, can't you?"

"One moment," said Miss Berrington, "my packet?"

I presented the packet, which she instantly transferred to Dion. "You will see this put into my carriage; we shall quarrel if you lose it."

"I'd rather lose my life," said Dionysius.

"After the turban catastrophe I dare not trust *your animal*, Mr. Fitzgerald, and *my insect* has a giddy wing—And now I say farewell, because I must—Mr. Fitzgerald you shall hear from me; we may never meet again, so 'gi'us a hand, and here's a hand o' mine.'" I thought her voice trembled a little—there was a transient gleam of feeling in the look she turned on us, but she soon relapsed into her tone of banter, promising to transmit my tender pressure to Miss Philly Horrigan.

CHAPTER VIII.

" My lute, be as thou wert when thou didst grow
With thy green mother in some shady grove—
What art thou but a harbinger of woe?"

FAREWELL ye sprightly images, ye Vulcan
galas—I have other scenery to paint, for which
I must mix dark colors!—deep shadowings and
mournful. I was prolix of my lighter sketches,
giving here a touch and there—though constitutionally grave yet I loved to dally with my
merry recollections—the gloomier snatches of
my memory must be hurried over.—I dare

not loiter, lest my hand tremble and I start from the phantoms I call up—One last attempt at cheerfulness and then—

It was late when we reached home—so late we hoped our guardians were asleep; but the glimmer cast by the one dim candle beneath the parlour door made our approach less cautious. My aunt, behind a well stocked basket, was at her never-ceasing hem-stitch; hardly venturing to look up until her task was done: my uncle was plodding over his school associate, whom no later friendship had thrown into the background—His eyes gave out a ray of old enthusiasm as he read and noted: the Homeric versions, once entered on for recreation, were now pursued with feverish avidity, in furtherance of a conscientious purpose which time could not cancel, nor weakness, nor affliction.

“You are late children,” said my aunt, arranging the huge pile of plain-work, *her* quota of the household earnings—“Helen you look paler every day—go to bed, go to bed—Heaven guard you my poor children!”

“Amen,” said my uncle, with a melancholy wave of his fine head.

That night I was not haunted by Miss Berrington—But Dionysius was—and for many, many, subsequent nights and days—He dreamed of her! he raved of her! he learned a whole Latin verb because he heard that she was literary. His flame for Miss McCarthy was puffed out—Dion was downright love-sick, and waxed pale as his pale tutor.

But the Berrington mania had infected the whole Bullock family, Quinilla inclusive—Monimia's gold bands and bugles were discarded; her hair was fastened in the Berrington knot—The Berrington sash was white, and the Berrington gown—so colors were sent to Coventry—The Berrington slide, subversive of rigadoon and hop, was practised; the Berrington bend—In short every innovation, stamped Berrington became current—If sticklers for old fun and finery dared to bluster or bewail—" 'tis the Berrington why!" silenced them *instantly*; "One woman to make such a rumpus!" groaned Mrs. Mulligan; "Miss Quinilla's gone cracked!"

No wonder! Miss Quinilla sported the Berrington hat! not the pattern—the identical hat!—the gipsy hat! It arrived—"so

genteelly!" observed Mrs. B—"with such a lady-like note!" said our cousin—the morning after the rout—Before ten minutes had elapsed every glass in the house had reflected Quinilla's halcyon face coiffed *à la Berrington*: the effect on our cousin's temper was magical: she sank into soft falsetto—"Twas the prettiest thing! so Arcadian! suited a pastoral *contour*! Cork to this day may remember that sweet gipsy-hat.

Perhaps Helen and I brooded as intensely over the Berrington adventure as even the love-lorn Dion; Helen was not conscious how often she ejaculated "should my book be successful!" It was fortunate that something had occurred to suspend our deep anxiety for Marion—Lord Sanford's purpose had been answered, therefore he was silent; the birth of his heir announced, we occupied but an insignificant place in his memory—if all were not well he would write to us. Thus we endeavoured to stifle our fears, yet we felt an unspeakable longing to receive a line, one line from Marion: we exhausted conjecture as to where she might be—at Geneva—in London—at Castle Dellival—To infer that she neglected us wilfully, would have been

treason to our feelings—Marion's heart was too well understood.

Our extreme ignorance of 'things that be' had made us unaware that the movements of the great are chronicled and blazoned in gazette, until one morning—about a week after Miss Berrington's departure—as I was preparing a despatch for Birmingham in the little back parlour, Dion burst upon me, brandishing a newspaper, and proclaiming the arrival from the continent, of Lord and Lady Sanford and suite, at the house of the Marquis Dellival, Portman Square.—I ran up stairs—with the paper to Helen—we read the paragraph a hundred times; we wept, we embraced—The children laughed and jumped, assuring each other it must be some news of Miss Berrington.

"That a thing we thought so little of," said I, "a thing we hardly knew of should be the medium of such intelligence!" I gazed at the paper in admiration. Another paragraph struck me, another familiar name—Died at Schloss Wallenberg in Upper Saxony, in consequence of wounds received while fighting under the banner of the Black Brunswickers at

Waterloo—Ernest, Baron Wallenberg—His son, Baron Derentsi, who was badly wounded in defending the regretted Duke of Brunswick at Ligny, still lingers.

I dropped the paper, Helen caught it up—I pointed to the passage.

Mrs. Bullock entered—"Don't tease yourselves with teaching to day," said the good soul "take the newspaper to your poor aunt: she won't be *poor* much longer now I hope; Lord Sanford will *think of himself* at last, and do *something* for you. You'll go to London I have no doubt."—She twinkled off two heavy eye-drops—"A house in Portman Square! Helen you'll be a great lady; I was always sure of that; 'twill be a *brain-blow* to us at any rate."

The children, with one accord, began to weep, beseeching Helen not to go to London.

Their father now came in, and, though his eyes looked very misty, he vowed his being made Lord Chancellor could not give him greater pleasure: he shook us by the hand wishing us joy, so often, and so ardently that I began to doubt his sanity. His wife and he had worked themselves into the belief that we

being indispensables of his Lordship's suite, were to set off forthwith. It took more words than the occasion warranted to convince them that our brother-in-law's arrival in Portman Square did not indubitably imply our exaltation. We accepted however leave of absence for the day, and returned home.

The needle and the pen were suspended when we entered : my aunt glanced at the old-fashioned silver watch which hung over the mantle-piece—"What *one* have brought you home children—are there letters?"

Helen read aloud the newspaper paragraph relating to Lord Sanford—my aunt's tears shone through her spectacles. "She is nearer to us, Fitzgerald, and that's one comfort."

"And a great one," said my uncle; "one that I thought would make my Helen smile again."

"Alas!" ejaculated my aunt, "we never hear a laugh now—never! time was when—but *she* is gone!—poverty and labour are not such grievous evils Helen; every heart must have its aching!"

Helen sat down—her lip quivered—"Have

I vexed you my own darling," said my aunt, flinging her arms round my sister's neck—"I did not mean to blame you—but if you would only look a little livelier Helen—just a little—Marion herself was not more lightsome than you were once, Helen."

That Helen should be considered wanting in strength of mind oppressed me; Helen in whom the constant presence of serious thoughts and lofty motives forbade the intrusion of gay fancies—I was beginning her defence, when by an expressive look she silenced me—Self-collected in a moment, she resumed the paper.—"There is other intelligence here involving a friend of ours."

"Mr. Fielding is married may be," said my aunt adjusting her spectacles.

I snatched the paper and stood before Helen—"Baron Wallenberg is dead," said I.

"Dead!" repeated my aunt, with a short scream; "then you must put on mourning."

I cast a side glance at Helen. Our connexion with Baron Wallenberg was thus openly avowed—My uncle motioned for the paper.

"Respect for the Baroness, you know, would

induce you to do that," pursued my aunt, coloring and stammering. "As to the Baron, poor good-for-nothing soul! you—*we* I mean to say—were never much beholden to him."

"He is dead," said my uncle gravely, laying down the paper.

"And the dead can't clear their characters," said my aunt; "so we'll let him rest, proud, stubborn creature."

"He died bravely, in the field of battle," said my uncle.

"With a thousand cannon balls whisking round his ears to keep his courage in him," returned my aunt;—"Ah Fitzgerald! there is more real bravery in the fearless death of the man of peace."

"And Baron Derentsi badly wounded!" said my uncle soliloquizing.

"Baron Derentsi, Fitzgerald!—Baron Derentsi badly wounded! well, bravery was in the blood of those bold Wallenbergs without a question—the very women had a Benjamin's portion—Dear, unlucky Madame Wallenberg! And he has a wife—and children too perhaps; poor souls, poor souls!"

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"I must write to her," said my uncle, linking his own chain of thought rather than responding to his wife.

"May I write too?" enquired Helen. He was so pre-occupied that he did not seem to hear her.

"A walk will do you good," said my aunt, with a significant nod.

We were so full of thought that we left the house and were proceeding to our accustomed haunt before we recollected that our little envoy had not appeared that morning. There was still a chance of letters—I hastened to the post-office—Helen returned home, for she seldom ventured upon what we termed the Patrician ground of Cork,

"Your messenger but now received your letter," said the post-master.—"A London letter."

I could not blame Phil for his punctual observance of my orders, yet the *contre-temps* annoyed me. I was turning away when a chaise, which bore marks of having just performed a long journey, drove up. Lady Dellival had not been murdered in the 'savage west,' for

her head was put forth from the window while the driver enquired for letters : an air of impatience enlivened her icy countenance. Several packets were handed to her ; she threw herself back, and the carriage drove off. I followed it up George's street, and saw her alight at the Hotel—her stately pace was considerably accelerated : she disappeared instantly, for no intercepting beggar had besieged the dust covered vehicle. But for my letter I might have addressed friend ' Brauty,' who was humming Moll Roon, and mopping the door step : as it was, I thought the minutes hours, until I joined Helen. She had not seen the recreant Phil. I was at the boundary of patience when she suggested that, not finding us at Mrs. Bullock's he might have concluded we had walked towards the wood—two yards or two miles were just the same to Phil.

And so it proved ; under our favorite beech sat Phil and Brecsthough, regaling upon muscles, which the dog had learned to like. Phil had made cushions of the fallen leaves for himself and friend, and he looked so happy that we could not scold him.

"I was at my nob's end where to find you," he exclaimed, up-turning a huge stone which had secured the letter, "but I know'd you'd come here, so I *gather* them leaves there for you."

We tore off Lord Sanford's envelope, threw ourselves upon the leaves, and read as follows.

"At last I am permitted to write to you—at last. But I *would* write—I told them I would write—What inconsistent people I am with!—they assert that I am ill when I was never better—I am only sick of grandeur. Oh! what a tedious, tedious, thing is ceremony!—a retinue of servants—fine apartments—and not one familiar guest—not one gay voice!—all dull, solemn, and magnificent! I conjure up the panorama of old scenes—days that have rolled away: I recall old sounds—the boatman's song—the hum of Granny's wheel, the ripple of the lake. I can do this, and I can dream of you—but I see you dimly through a spectral haze—a distance always lengthening. My spirit is not with the things around me, it wanders home;—whose home?—are you all there—all—is it *sure* that you are there? they tell me so, but—

Had I even one of my old books to read, I should be calmer—alas ! I have nothing of my former happy, happy, life, but just my recollections, and the light of these shadowy thoughts is gone : disappointment comes so often—I am suspicious now—I have no faith in promises—none ! A desolate feeling of abandonment oppresses me ; sorrow has fastened on my heart ; it seems to me as if I moved in a different state of being from heretofore—a cold, cold, region ! I must not fly to meet my husband as I used to do : it would not be decorous—I must practise dignity, and become accomplished, that I may not disgrace the patronage of Lady Dellival !—I try to gratify Lord Sanford, indeed, I do ;—Yet I have a terror of the person, to please whom, I am forced from my own nature. She is not here, but Lord Dellival is, and yet I must not see him before the Marchioness returns, lest it offend her ! How disheartening all this is ! I thought I should be welcomed as I could welcome. Meantime I am trained into seeming what I am not—fettered by etiquette, and obliged to ask permission of two nurses and the family physician before I can see my child !—

The little pet darling that I longed to shew you as my own, is not my own! I must not fondle it—I must not hush it; it never hears a mother's lullaby! I must not coax it—speak to it: the creature that I dote on lies in solemn grandeur, or is borne about by nurses who look so sour and petulant if I dare to take it; I, that could kneel by its cradle all day long, and gaze on its transparent lids, and watch for the opening of the deep blue eyes—oh! dear Helen, dear Walter! I could be happy still, if they would suffer me to nurse my child. In the cabins of my own sweet glen the mother can caress her babe—but here—let no one covet grandeur whose affections are like mine.

“Write to me—take care that you tell me to be patient—if you pity me, it will break my heart—persuade me I am captious, that I should be *glad* of all this pomp—bid me to say ‘thank you’, when they fling a gorgeous canopy between me and my infant. Oh! ’tis a bitter, bitter, thing to be a mother, to feel the flood of tenderness that I feel, and to be compelled to waste my hours upon nothings! My babe is weak they say. Poor thing! it has caught its

mother's melancholy. Were it nursed like our mountain children, it would be strong: were it shewn the glories of this wondrous world, it would be good: good as we were, as you are still—I am not good, now, Helen; hideous thoughts affright me—thoughts that make me shudder!—Do not come here, you may grow wicked too. Must my tomb be in the stranger's land? must my child be as the stranger's child, and never see his mother's home? My poor child! when it prattles, it will not prattle of God's works: it will learn to look proud and discontented. Write to me—write to me, all of you—tell me that I should give you up, that I should rejoice—tell me I am wrong—wicked! Ought I to detest these sullen women; so full of lip-deep deference, and yet insinuating that I would injure my own child? could I, Helen? could I?—surely, I am Marion, your Marion.”

The letter was concluded, we looked at each other long and silently; we were afraid to sound each other's thoughts; our utterance was choked; we could not shed tears! That one unmentionable wo we had so laboured to cast off, crept forward like a serpent—words were

not necessary to unfold the bent of our apprehensions.

Helen at last faltered, "We are mistaken—we ~~are~~ mistaken; it is only a natural depression—a despondency consequent on illness and alienation from her friends. Let us give the letter to my aunt, and observe her while she reads it."

We were interrupted—"Well, I never see the likes o' you," said Phil, angrily, "to be letting our letters sky about that way. Brees—though an' I ha' been huntin' it this half-hour, —didn't you see the wind risin?" He presented the envelope which had flown off disregarded.

We ran over Lord Sanford's flimsy apologies, which were scribbled on the cover—Serious engagements had prevented his addressing us earlier—at last we came to the name we longed to meet—

"Lady Sanford continues nervous and impatient—she wished to nurse her child, but our medical adviser forbids it absolutely; the premature birth of my son makes strict adherence to the rules prescribed, imperative. Lord Del-

ival is so anxious in this matter that he wishes to remove his heir to Castle Dellival. I should feel much pleasure in inviting you Walter and our sister Helen, but Lady Sanford is so excitable on points connected with what she persists in calling 'home,' that our physician judges it indispensable to interrupt—merely for the present—dangerous associations, and has directly prohibited communication even by letter with her family; at *least* for a few weeks—therefore do not be alarmed at a temporary suspension of our correspondence. The absence of the Marchioness is very distressing; I reckoned upon her, for arranging Marion's *début*; an introduction to our brilliant circles may have a salutary effect, for the complaint is merely nervous. My house progresses slowly—When Lady Sanford's flutter of spirits abates, I shall be delighted to resume our intercourse; meantime with best wishes to Helen believe me &c. &c.

Before I reached the signature, the letter was flying off in fragments—"Let us walk forward," said Helen, "and consult."

The day had changed, an uncertain wind

wafted in eddies the melancholy-looking leaves. Phil followed us, moralizing on the sudden departure of the patch of sunshine in which he had located himself and Breesthough—"One's sure o' nothin' here, but cold an' hunger, haith! there's Carrigrohan shiverin', too, poor baste!"

We stopped opposite the old castle to say farewell, for a heavy something—a bodement Marion would have called it—told us we should visit the banks of that regretted Lee, no more. The grim old ruin looked yet more dreary through the mist. Phil twirled his ozier cane, lamenting he could not spear another meal of shell-fish, "the 'cute craythurs had shut their mouths agsinst the wind," he said, "every thing is turned contrary-ways—look at the beautiful Blarney strame that glistered as blue as my eye this morning; look at it now—tearin' through the yellow clay, bad cess to it! givin' our Lee the jaundice!"

"And thus," thought I, "may the current of the mind be stained and distorted, with as little preparation."

CHAPTER IX.

It is not but the tempest that doth shew
The sea-man's cunning ; but the field that tries
The captain's courage ; and we come to know
Best what men are, in their worst jeopardies.

Daniel.

DESPITE of Lord Sanford's prohibition we wrote to Marion, addressing also a short but forcible remonstrance to his Lordship. Our letters to Marion were worded carefully ; we tried to inspire confidence and resignation ; our whole hearts were in the assurances of affection we poured forth : every thought of a joyful futurity, we protested, was bound up with the hope of our meeting ; she must imbue herself

with this hope, and control her unusual tendency to doubt and to despond.

Our letters despatched, after a long and thoughtful deliberation we determined to confide in my aunt, whom we judged most capable of bearing up against anxiety ; her simple but solid understanding taught her to baffle affliction by a wholesome appreciation of the comforts still vouchsafed us. My uncle, with feelings more refined, perhaps I should say more strained, had less philosophic stamina, and was less fitted to struggle with suspense than his vigorous-minded partner. It was difficult however to win her private ear ; there were now no farm-yard and dairy ; no culinary cares to interrupt her day-long sittings with her husband : these were prolonged, of late, beyond the stated hour of retirement, and we remarked that my uncle looked restless if we outstayed his signal—"good night."

Mourning had been provided for me and Helen ; this, though of the plainest fabric, somewhat diminished our little fund ; my aunt stitched faster, my uncle applied himself to

Homer more intensely, but never omitted sending Katy to the Vulcan for the newspaper.

The Bullocks remarked on the anomaly of our being habited in black, while my aunt continued firm to the olive-green camlet she had brought from the glen. My uncle's rusty coat might have been assigned to any color. Finding we were silent, our friends contented themselves with extolling our improved appearance. Quinilla gaped, and it is very likely would have beset us with enquiries, had she not satisfied herself by a leap of ratiocination common to her—that we thought *black* economical. Curiosity, however, had it burned ten times fiercer, would have been extinguished by intelligence our cousin just then received: intelligence which called forth hyperbolical effusions of delight. Theodore was made a captain! he had fought so gallantly in the late campaign of Flanders, that rapid promotion had, in a few months, dubbed him Captain O'Toole. "Didn't I tell you," said Mr. B., "didn't I tell you, Mrs. B.—there would be a Flemish account of the French who came in the way of

O'Toole." It was rumoured that he had spitted two cuirassiers with his own hand, and had put to flight the imperial guard with the shout "Crom-a-boo!—Thunder an' Irish—Wellington aboo!"

Whose head wagged so high as Quinny's!—"My brother, the captain," began her discourse, "My brother, the captain," concluded it. The flirtation with Mr. McCarthy, hitherto, had had no result; but Katy, winking with both eyes, affirmed "my 'brother, the captain,' would soon bring things to a head."

I thought I detected a slight touch of elation in my aunt's honest countenance when she gave us a blessing that night; next morning at breakfast she twice introduced Archbishop O'Toole, the patriot prelate who headed Ireland's last struggle with Strongbow.

In this exhilarating conjuncture our sables escaped further notice; we pursued undisturbed our melancholy train of reflections. Even Miss Berrington's star waned fainter and fainter as the effulgence of Captain O'Toole's was diffused: *our* trust in the zeal of our lively acquaintance also declined. Winter approached: the

sickness of baffled hope fell on us : no reply from Marion or Lord Sanford—I became trebly anxious to consult my aunt. At last a slight indisposition which confined my uncle to his chamber gave me the occasion. She read my sister's letter without comment, folded it, and looked at me intently—

“ You have written Walter ? ”

“ We wrote instantly ”—

“ And no reply ! ”

I was obliged to touch on Lord Sanford's communication.

“ Forbid to correspond with her own family !
—Write at once to Mr. Fielding—enclose Marion's letter—don't lose a moment—write—”

The advice was obviously judicious—my letter was earnest and circumstantial.

I acquainted Helen with the result of this discussion, but I hid my suspicion that my aunt's fears took the same coloring as ours : before I entered on my day's monotonous task at the Vulcan, I went with my letter to the post. Half way thither I met Phil, gasping, his eyes full of some impending novelty—
“ There's a letter, Sir—but the *cheater* wo'n't

give it widout money ! I *tolt* him over an' over again we never paid nothin' for our letters."

This was a dilemma I myself was unprepared for ; I hastened to the shop, and requested Mr. Bullock to lend me a few shillings.

"A few shillings ! pooh ! take a guinea, just for pocket-money."

I made no demur, for I remembered that our salary was due. In a tremor of excitement I took the shortest way across the fashionable promenade to George's-street ; it proved the longest—my acquaintance "*Beanty*" was at her matinal song and scourings—as I was speeding past her, she projected the long handle of her badge of office, intercepting me adroitly : I resisted.

"Did you leave your manners in your ould coat pocket?—Let alone the mop-stick or you'll get mopped in earnest ; you didn't look so sulky when you came coaxin' us to shew you to the quolity ; 'tis proud o' your new clothes you are—who carried you to thim that made a man o' you, and all I had for payment was one shabby hog."

"Pray let me pass," said I.

"Your back is up bekase I grabbed that shilling—small blame to me—couldn't you divide fair! sure tis for your good I stopped you—my lady what's her name, you stole the purse from, came here huntin' for you high an' low."

"I stole the purse from!"

"That might be only a guess o' mine to come at the *shoot* o' black.—'Tis true enough though—she sent the hue and cry after *you* or after some sinner o' your name, so I made bold you robbed her."

This extraordinary intelligence somewhat relaxed my efforts to escape—

"Upon my word then black becomes you—what a poorty blush you have—hand me a thirteener an' I'll tell you how I hoaxed her."

"Pray let me pass."

"You won't! then I'll tell you for nothin' but *ould frinship*:—Back she come, my lady, from her trip in the *poshay*, a calling for the masther, and askin' if he know'd where one Fitzjarald lived. The masther only know'd that I was sharp at speering rogues out, so he sends down for *me*. My lady faces me like judge O'Daly, but I don't mind high madams

more than mushrooms—sure my mother was a Donovan!—so I stood her out like General Holt*—thought no more of her than I think o' you—'Fitzjarald is a grate name,' siz I, 'signs by there's a grate deal of um'—I wouldn't mintion you, quite 'cute, thinkin' 'twas her purse she missed;—'a grate name indeed,' siz I, callin' up my mem'ry pensive-like. 'There's Fitzjarald o' Bally-hooly, an' Fitzjarald o' Ballina-sloe, an' big Fitzjarald—he's dead though,—an' Sir Judkin John Fitzjarald, a proper man—an' Fitzjarald o' Corcahbeg, a Curnel too'—siz I—'an there's Fitzjarald the hair-dresser just by in George's-strect, siz I, 'only people say he have no right to Fitz, just clapped it before jarald for a flash-like'—'You may go,' siz she, looking as if she'd munch me widout mustard—"Travel Cork from Bandon road to Blarney-lane,' siz I, 'there's not another o' the name'—She threw out her arm that way, manin,' 'get about your business,' but she threw nothin' else—'Twas on the pip o' my tongue to ask her if she meant you—I wouldn't

* See his autobiography lately edited by Mr. C. Croker.

tell her where you live on no account—you live in Pig-street don't you ?”

“ How long did she remain ?” said I.

“ A whole day an' a half, huntin' high an' low for this Fitzjerald ; although there was a ewgger-muggerin' among the quolity servants that their ' My Lord ' was taken' very bad upon a sudden ; so at last my Lady rattled herself off to Dublin with her four green footmen—I wonder was it you she wanted ?—Tell truth—*did* you come honest by that new rig ?”

Phil at the moment made a diversion in my favor by kicking down the mop-pail—Beauty flew at him with bitter objurgation, and I proceeded.—The incident just related took off the edge of my impatience—I revolved stedfastly the bearings of the riddle, and was astonished at my stupidity in not having sooner hit on the solution—Lord Sanford corresponded with Lady Dellival ; he had mentioned us : through courtesy to him she had wished to notice us—I was glad we had escaped this notice.

The letter, which Phil had mentioned, was a double letter superscribed “ Walter Fitzgerald, Esq.” and subscribed “ Fanny Berrington.”—

I had looked out the signature with some impatience, for the address was puzzling. It began—"My Pliny"—and proceeded thus:—

"We ought to commence our 'Familiar epistles,' familiarly. Was it not thus Trajan addressed his Pliny? Note that I regale you with a sprinkling of *small pedantry*.

"Accidents, relevant and irrelevant, prevented my communicating with you sooner. Our *Premiere*, after detaining us, in expectation, at some Irish port with an unwritable name, signified by fly-sheet her regal pleasure that we should proceed without her; Lord Dellival, influenced by paralysis, had recalled her suddenly. Our Pictish port was out of beat, she must choose the nearest.

"This secession of our mirth-extinguisher rejoiced my social little band—I alone lamented. The disappointment of the murder was cutting. I cannot get on with my *romans* in consequence—so I committed your galley to the wave without a consort. But I do not mean to dissolve partnership: *au contraire*, I have a novel bark upon the stocks; and, as *Imperator*, I command you to inventify anew, and furnish a com-

pagnon de voyage for my *Enterprise*. To work—to work; I will not be gainsayed—another legend, or a Runic Saga, or Aristophanes travestie, or hints on etiquette, or lines upon Miss Philly Horrigan. Think also of some quaint device—a pastoral vignette—Phyllis in poetic azure, and Damon with a face of innocent confusion. Seriously, Mr. Fitzgerald, you *must* resume the pen; I want to make a hit, and I dare not shake the dice without you. Your first essay, which, by the way, I had not time to read, was purchased without cavil; and yet my publisher is dainty. The bill which I enclose is passing well for an *anonymous*. If the gale of public favor fill our sails, we shall arrive at Ophir. For my sake be industrious. The other speculation totters; Lady Dellival, not being murdered in your by-ways, may outlive her Lord, and my design upon the Marquisate—which your sagacious hint gave rise to—thus be frustrated. His Lordship, it is true, has rallied; but he is many years my Lady's senior—so this preferment has a shivery base. I feel more trust in our co-partnership. You will not jilt your poor *attachée*, will you?"

“Fielding has left London. I have transmitted your packet to his father’s seat in Hertfordshire. This is a business letter! I would discourse you further but for a rescript from our *premiere*. Dellival house opens to night to the Exclusives—a signal that his lordship convalesces. I will remit you memoranda of the evening; they may assist your sketches, if not drowned *in transitu*. After all, the Bullock *rout*, is the rout *par excellence*; other bevys are so tame! feather and ribbon animals!

“Pray Mr. Fitzgerald remember me to your genial and congenial group, and to that pink of pastorellas Phillida—they are the pearls of memory, Miss O’Toole the pear-pearl. Improve the Irish! ’spak o’ loupin’ o’er a linn’!—I would not have a bog reclaimed: the least improvement must deteriorate—Behold how bulls are tramping in my brain—but you may not be in humour to appreciate my cattle, so—*vale*. Fanny Berrington.

“I dare not permit myself to hope your sister accords to me so high a place in her remembrance as she fills in mine.”

I had the grace to read the lady's letter to the end before I looked at the enclosure—The bill was for two hundred pounds !

It is impossible to give even a faint idea of Helen's face when I informed her that the manuscript was accepted—another asked for—and named the sum. The rayless grief that had eclipsed her youthful animation vanished ; joy burst forth—gushes of tears—broken exclamations—the transports of a delighted child—Her mind appeared under a new developement—at first she stood incredulous, and then flung her arms around me. “ My poor, poor brother ! so sad, so patient !—you were sinking Walter—I tried to shut it out—but you *were* sinking—your cough ! your wasted hands ! you shall work no more—no more ! ”

It was fortunate we were alone ; the family had gone to a wax-work exhibition. *My* mind had hitherto reposed on Helen's but we seemed to have exchanged characters that morning. Her first impulse was to fly home ; I besought her to defer the revealment for a week or two—“ We must prepare our worthy patrons,” said I, “ and form some project for the future. I

will never consent to live in idleness while you are labouring—Read Miss Berrington's letter."

I watched Helen while she read; through the first page her radiant satisfaction was unclouded; but at length keener feelings than those excited by pecuniary advantage, gained ascendancy. She started, and read aloud—"Fielding has left London—Dellival-house opens to night"—She laid down the letter and looked at me earnestly. "Marion must be well else they would scarcely think of—Still it may be prudent to defer—Did you say a week or two?—It was for your sake Walter—but, with hope and—I did not contemplate giving up the children."

Her broken sentences shewed me that she was revolving matter very foreign to the circumstance that had so excited her. "Yes," she ejaculated, "let us be silent—meantime I can write—'tis no labour, it keeps off a host of tortures."

There is nothing minuted in my journal between this conversation and Miss Berrington's second letter dated, Baker street, November, 1815.

“ To him that reads—

“ Are you inditing my panegyric, or soaring to the airy halls of fiction?—In either case you merit our imperial nod—I progress at length, having found a model for a heroine—attend.

“ As related in my last I was cited—in virtue of my order—the Exclusive—to appear at Del-lival-house—Anno Domini November the first, as Pat says.

“ Her Ladyship received me with Siddonian majesty, in jet and sweeping sables; some branch of her Teutonic tree is lopped—I hardly looked at her—an embodiment of Shakspeare's beautiful inspirations stood beside her—Juliet, Imogen, Ophelia, neither individually, but a blending of all three. It was Lady Sanford.—I had seen once, but once, a head so perfect. She spoke with the Spanish *The-the-ar*, and her lengthened cadence to my ear sounded like a melody that no mortal artist could invent; I closed my eyes to recall a floating intonation which resembled it, and could have fancied that some thoughtful harpist played snatches of half-forgotten serenades. Her shrinking air,

her neck gently bowed, accorded with the trembling pathos of her voice ; when her eyelids drooped, her countenance wore the exquisite repose of Grecian statuary, but when she raised them :—here I am at fault—There was something in the troublous lustre so inexplicable—so indescribable—I could not look away from her—She gave me the idea of a lost seraph committed for her trespass to the genius of a soulless realm ; afraid to murmur, yet goaded by remembrances of her former happiness.”

I had read thus far on my way home, but I could not decipher another word ; the lines swam before me ; my limbs bent ; I leaned against the side wall of the lane I had turned into. The blind man’s daily stand was there, his mournfully incessant cry “ Pity the blind, Pity the blind,” used to revive the ‘ *Date obolum Belisario.*’ Partly from compassion, and partly from affection to my classic reminiscences, I often chose that alley to drop a mite into the hand of Belisarius. I dragged myself onward to make my customary offering ; the heavy note of the beggar and the toll of a

neighbouring church-bell fell awfully ; dizzy and faint I staggered up the lane and reached Christ-church area—the gate was open, but the congregation had not yet assembled. I entered the church and groped along the side aisle to the remote corner in which Helen and I were accustomed to kneel. I could not utter a prayer but I thought one. The vulture gripe upon my heart relaxed. Oh what is blindness to the ceaseless apprehension of that only ‘eclipse’ which can be termed ‘total.’

CHAPTER X.

Adoucissons leur sort, traitons avec bonté,
Ces malheureux bannis de la société ;
De ces nâmes exclus des scènes de la vie
Laissez errer en paix la triste fantaisie.
Par de durs traitemens ne les effarouchons pas,
Que des objets rians se montrent sous leurs pas ;
Entourons les de fleurs, que le cour des fontaines,
Roule nouveau Lethe, l'heureux oublis des peines.

Dehille.

I RETURNED to the Vulcan, but found myself unequal to the worry of instruction, so I gave the excuse of a severe head-ache, and withdrew to our lodging. Fastening my chamber door, I resumed the letter.

“ Your accidental encounter with Lady Dellival was fortunate for our correspondence, as our comments thereupon may inspire you with a touch of the same interest in the beings of my world that I feel for those of yours. This Lady Sanford, absorbs me deeply ; until I saw her, and one other person whom I must not name I never dreamed that my mercurial essence could be depressed by the haze of sentiment.— So young, so beautiful, of rank so elevated, yet wearing the blank aspect of a wanderer in a fantastic region, bewildered by unintelligible objects ! There was a hovering of flutterers around her. I longed for a witch’s staff to convert them into real butterflies, and to transform the coved apartment, its festoons of radiance and sumptuous addenda, into a cottage with small *furnitory*, which I would sequester in that flower of Islands—Dinis—with none of human-born to grace it but Fanny Berrington, and this sweet stranger. She is just the creature one would like to treasure up and fondle. A passing smile did *sometimes* gild the lovely face, glancing like a sun-beam on a statue, then she would look like one of those who ‘ with the

incorporal air do hold discourse,'—a laughing light.—What can have snapped her thread of joyousness? Lord Sanford seems as fond a husband as fashion will permit, and the family Galen, who stood 'like his grandsire cut in alabaster,' scrutinizing the angelic novelty, informed me, that he (Lord Sanford) is a doting father. The Marquis—*mon futur*—is head nurse; nay, the Dowager, (for Dowager I fear she will be 'spite of my orisons), shares the family fervor, and stalks daily to the baby dormitory, prescribing with her solemn coadjutor (Doctor Oldstyle) some dietetic process for this 'heir of all the Capulets.' Thus there is no lapse in ceremony—yet I have a foreboding of—I don't know what."

"Lady Dellival never left her young sister for a moment; the latter regarded our superb Dictatress with an eye that poor Prince Arthur might have fixed on his tormentors; a perturbed, imploring, frightened earnestness—Once, by adroit manœuvre, I got inside the imperial swarm and ventured to address her.—Why Ireland came pat upon my tongue is wonderful: tourists, perhaps, are fond of shewing up their

gleanings. Had she caught a signal to rejoin her seraph-kin she could not have brightened into more rapturous expression.

‘In Ireland! travelling in Ireland! did you visit the Esk?—Adragole?—were you near glen—’

“Lady Sanford let me present you to Prince Schwarzenval,’ said our *Premiere*, in her mauve-solemn tone—I never was so furious in my life—Just as I had won a beam of notice to be foiled by this ‘cold obstruction!’ I perceived however that Lady Sanford was as moodful as myself; she turned her sybil eyes on Lady Dellival—Why did I quail while the stoic Peeress went calmly through the ceremony of presentation?—I did tremble, for I again detected that ominous sparkle of unsettled light which had before perplexed me—What *can* it prognosticate.”

“There were others present who might have passed for beautiful, but before the dazzling charms of Lady Sanford they faded into utter insignificance. Our gilt-edged beaux strained to emerge from common-place in tendering homage to this new divinity. She received

their incense with downcast eyes, deep blushes, and sometimes an ineffably expressive gesture of impatience. 'Tis very odd—man delighteth me not, but woman doth!—I could never dote upon a bearded beauty. This Lady Sanford comes between me and our enterprise.

“Are your faculties propitious?—are you fabricating?—have you a spare murder, or a suicide, to dispose of on easy terms, or a genteel robbery? I cannot diversify; every puppet of my brain turns into Lady Sanford. I'll blot her out by bringing in another Pythia—tell your sister that I sigh for the quiet sanctities of her little studio; she may rejoice me by acknowledging this missive, should *you* have wandered to 'woody Morven,' or to the sky-blue maid of streamy Luvius,

'Phyllis, Phyllis

Fairer far than Amaryllis!'

a pretty commence for a bucolic; you may have it gratis.

“I dine to day in state, and must screw my visage to the doleful. Next autumn (provided

we make a hit) I invite myself to feast and fun with ' the Callaghans, Brallaghans.'

" Farewell—ever your poor subsidiary,

" FANNY BERRINGTON."

I had not finished this desultory epistle when a low tap and a whispered, "'tis I," announced Helen.

" Monimia told me you were ill Walter—you *are* ill; your hands are burning—a letter! —'tis all over!"

" Indeed 'tis scarcely worse than we imagined," I replied.

She read the letter breathlessly; I dreaded to hear her comments. " And no friend near her!" she ejaculated—" not one!"

" Fielding," said I, " will have received—"

She interrupted me by pointing to some crossed lines which I had overlooked.

" I might have speculated with our friend," said Miss Berrington, " upon the causes of Lady Sanford's singular depression. Fielding and Sanford used to be acquainted; but (and without a valediction,) our philosopher has left

the kingdom, omitting even to defray, by a line of thanks, the portage of that huge packet I so carefully transmitted him. Never cumber me again with freights for the ungrateful!"

"Then all is lost!" I cried; "she is under management which will destroy her!"

"All is not lost," said Helen; "a ray of hope appears—another friend—Miss Berrington is not the frivolous person I imagined: through this levity I descry indications of a feeling heart; I will confide in her."

"What all?" said I.

"To divulge the whole of our sad story," replied Helen, "would be to divide those sympathies which I wish to concentrate on Marion. I will reveal only so much as necessity requires—it is our last resource. We must act boldly and at once—without some one to counteract the influence of the cold, the obstinate, and selfish, Marion's enfeebled reason may, indeed, give way. Miss Berrington is the intimate of Lady Dellival: she is ingenious, and may become the best physician. To relink Marion, even remotely, with the friends they so unwisely part her from, is essential. What we appre-

hend may be averted. There is still an hour to post—do not interrupt me.”

She drew my little table to her, and began to write. I watched without being capable of thought, the progress of her pen—the creaking of a stair beneath a heavy tread disturbed us—my aunt entered.

“Well, I knew I heard some one overhead. A letter!—is it from Marion?—are you stricken dumb?—has she seen Lady Dellival—answer me at once—has she?”

“Marion has seen Lady Dellival,” said I.

My aunt impatiently snatched up Miss Berrington’s letter—“Who is this from?—I can’t make head or tail of it.” She turned to the signature—“Who is Fanny Berrington?”

Secrecy was no longer possible—Helen’s look was sufficiently admonitory: she continued to write, while I related in an undertone the leading circumstances of our acquaintanceship with Miss Berrington, and with these became entangled my casual interview with Lady Dellival. Every incident in my narrative, even Helen’s project, seemed subordinate to this interview in the amazement it excited.

“Lady Dellival!—are you quite sure it was Lady Dellival?—But go on, go on; I am curious to hear of this fine lady—so she took you for a—go on, go on.”

The next mark of admiration was elicited by the alms her ladyship had flung me.

“Walter,” said my aunt gravely, “*you* are romancing too; it is beyond belief that Lady Dellival should fling your father’s son a shilling!”

“Remember my poverty-stricken appearance aunt,” said I.

My aunt, as it seemed, could remember nothing but the insult; angry tears started to her eyes; she dashed them off to look at me more earnestly, imbibing with every partial glance fresh food for indignation. To obliterate this dire annoyance I went on with my story, but her attention did not become fixed until I mentioned the return of Lady Dellival, and, by digression, remarked on her enquiries which evinced a disposition to notice us. The countenance of my auditress assumed a sarcastic expression, most foreign to its natural one as she muttered—“*Notice you!*”—I gave her Miss

Berrington's first letter; she read it, but her mind seemed dwelling upon other matters; its enclosure drew a faint ejaculation, and a blessing upon Helen; but the second letter banished her rankling contemplations: she struggled to suppress her sobs, devouring the lines and, unconsciously, giving utterance to her thoughts—"Marion moodful!—Marion!—the larks themselves were not so merry!—Elevated rank! what is their pomp to her!—my poor, poor child!—if you knew but all—What!—he gone too!—left the kingdom!"

She dropped the letter surveying us with a despairing look. Helen paused in her occupation to relate rapidly what we had decided on; adding, "unless you disapprove."

"Alas child!" said my aunt, "can I approve or disapprove?—these things confound the earthly-minded."

"We may afflict ourselves without a cause," said I, trying to force consolation from a tongue hitherto so prompt with it. "Marion's situation is irksome, because new; her depression may proceed from—"

"A burdened spirit!" said my aunt—"She

yearns after old affections; to uproot them is to uproot life; can a broken mind bear up against perpetual restraint? There is a crisis at hand you must prepare for. I have many things to settle with Fitzgerald—he dreaded so the meeting with that *charitable* lady—it would not frighten *me*—in your case perhaps—But I am doubtful of advice; you must ask for higher guidance.—Our old age will be desolate if you and Helen do not act with firmness.”

She left us; her last words were flurried and ambiguous; the acidity of her reference to Lady Dellival was not in keeping with her general forbearance, nor, as I considered, justified by an offence originating in a very natural mistake, and one which I myself upon review, had laughed at. I fancied also that she was dissatisfied with our arrangements—there is a bantering tone, thought I, in Miss Berrington’s style, which perplexes a mind so matter-of-fact as my good aunt’s: she thinks our volatile acquaintance unsuited to the trust. I pondered on what I considered to be the prominent features of the lady’s character, until they

seemed to approximate to those of Sanford. Her kindly impulses might be as evanescent as were his—"Helen," said I, "stop one moment."

"Not half a moment," replied Helen, who was already hurriedly folding her long letter—"Here—you will just have time to seal it—how you tremble!—I will go with it myself."

Before this letter could have reached Miss Berrington we received the following.

"In good sooth is November a suicidal month, and this a day when one may 'creep into the jaundice by being peevish.' I write for mere exhaustion of my bitter fancies—Forgive this egotism; 'tis inhuman to disturb you with my *penserosos*, but babbling gives one such relief.—That interesting, unhappy, Lady Sanford!—I will keep my eyes dry and my paper fair, if possible, for dismal thoughts crowd on, to make this letter of a sad, sad countenance—The awful riddle is expounded—she is deranged!—horrid word!—it fell like an ice-bolt on me. Envious as she was thought!—Ah! Mr. Fitzgerald, who is to be envied? who commiserated?—Can we penetrate to the

secret springs of joy and wo?—I saw her but once since I wrote to you, peerless in a crowd of beauties. She recognised me instantly, and drew me to her with such a smile! She would question me upon my travels, but there was always some fretful interruption—Alas! alas! the cause of that ominously bright eye-flash is now revealed; it was the index of fitful moods, the forerunner of delirium. The more virulent features of her fatal malady appeared soon after—there is an end to my *facetiae* for an age at very least.

“I suggested gentle treatment and appliances I knew to be composing, but Lady Dellival tells me there was tendency to insanity before her marriage; therefore little hope: and Dr. Oldstyle, the family regulator, drops his solemn jaw when I hold discourse of her recovery. He is so wedded to his antiquated code, I have no faith in him—If Fielding were but here!—They speak of removing her to an *Asylum*—what a perversion of the word!—Is such a creature to be given over to a doltish keeper?—Lord Sanford, it seems, requires a little overruling—a *little*!

“ You would not wonder that I am chafed had you beheld her—innocent, helpless creature! by her very failing made more affecting!—Has she no relatives?—she was married, it is said, in Greece. I beset Lord Dellival—he spoke of danger to the child—I grew heated—my importunity was drowned by an asthmatic peal of coughs.

“ As to Lord Sanford, his selfishness is a coat of mail; he fancies himself broken-hearted, and covers his dry eyes with a convenient handkerchief.—The child is all he thinks of—and my Lady, and her Doctor, seem as much enamoured of the brat. I wish the thing in Heaven!—Could you but see the Seraph creature they talk so coolly of incarcerating!

“ I visited with Fielding, some months ago, one of these moral lazar-houses—blots upon our social institutions.—Pitying Heaven! nothing human could hold out against such horrors—the creak of bolts, the clank of chains, the chorus of wild shrieks and sobs!—cells, or rather kennels, that exhale a noisome effluvia—straw beds or none—loopholes barbarously

grated. Our dogged conductor, with far less intelligence than many of those so mercilessly guarded, leered fatuitously as he shook his whip before the eyes of the poor aliens, who looked up to us with such imploring sorrow, uttering a faint lament.—Oh Sir! truly I could have ‘wept my spirit from mine eyes.’—They were silenced with a blow, a gag, a word of horrible reviling! I wish I could transfer these facts to fiction, but they are *upon record**— Shall we live to witness a subversion of these Moloch practises?—Do they think that loss of reason involves loss of feeling? Is wretchedness a mark for outrage?—the finest nerves are shattered soonest; to me there is a sanctity in those blighted creatures; I would not approach a paragon of gifted intellect with half the reverence, the cautious delicacy, that I would Lady Sanford.

* See the Parliamentary reports of 1815 and 1816 on this subject. The extreme horrors there attested to, are too startling even for fiction. Of late years the condition of the insane both as to moral and physical treatment has undergone vast amelioration. Still there is scope for the improvements even

"Farewell Sir—my subject banishes all pretence of liveliness—I have been led imperceptibly from the chief object of my letter, which was to enquire whether Mr. Fielding had acquainted you with his address."

This letter drew no tears—agony has none. We instantly determined on our procedure. Helen, indeed, governed by an awful foreshadowing of the event, had made secret preparations. I left to her the trying office of disclosure, and hastened to the quay: the more convenient packet had left that morning, but there was a trading vessel bound direct to London, which would complete her lading in the afternoon. I prevailed upon the Captain to take on board two passengers, and in a few hours we were embarked.

Not the slightest opposition was made to our departure: the pressure of distress seemed to have caused a ruggedness of feeling: no complaint was uttered, no regret. My uncle at the

now meditated by the enlightened and benevolent—Well may these agents of mercy be styled "The Stewards of Providence."

first was bravest : he rallied his failing energies and bade his wife make ready to accompany us. My aunt, with cool persistency, disregarded a purpose the execution of which his bodily weakness made impracticable, urged him to address Lady Dellival by letter, and busied herself with arrangements for our voyage, denying herself the consolation of a tear, and prohibiting farewell. The letter was committed to me with a solemn, and, what I considered a superfluous exhortation, to be resolute.

Slauveen had left us the day before to visit his mother ; our scant luggage, therefore, was deposited on board by Katy and Phil Nabbs— we had not seen the boy for some weeks ; he looked sullen, and made no response to our good bye.

Seated on a coil of rope we waved our hands to the weeping household of the Vulcan, who had attended us to the Quay, sobbing their apprehensions that we would forget them when among our *grand connexions*. Alas ! they little knew the grandeur we were going to. Mr. Bullock had tried to thrust a bank-note into my hand, discrediting my assurances that we

had ample funds—"I hoped you might have been my children," said Mrs. Bullock, "but wishing wo'n't make people fall in love with one another." Even Quinilla was drowned in tears. A thick snow haze was falling—we caught the last faint "God be with you," and the vessel pursued its course in dreary twilight.

When real grief absorbs you how contemptible appear those minor vexations which in your vacant hours engender fretfulness. Of all the petty crosses and privations of our voyage we felt only the tediousness. The wind was adverse; we were ten days on the passage, ten days of that mortal tribulation which physical suffering can hardly heighten. It was evening when we moored in the Thames. The Captain, a blunt, honest man, pitying our inexperience and apparent friendlessness, offered us an asylum for the night. I accepted his kindness gratefully—Helen had scarcely slept since our embarkation, and in the strange confusion which assailed us it was necessary, we saw, to take more guarded measures than our ignorance had contemplated.

I walked towards the luggage to identify our

little property ; it was almost dark ; I rubbed my eyes, doubting the sense that evidenced to the apparition of Phil Nabbs astride upon our packages.

"Child," exclaimed Helen, "how wicked to desert your parents !"

"'Tis *themselves* is the deserter," said Phil sullenly.

"Your poor father and mother !" continued Helen—"think of their heart-breaking when they found you gone !"

"Dad's dead an' Mam's married," said Phil, gulping either wrath or sorrow. "There's nobody but Breesthough will crack their hearts for Philly !"

The dog and child were so conjoined in my ideas, that I now expected to see the turnspit limp from some lurking hole—"Your father dead ! your mother—Child you are deceiving us."

"May be so," said Phil, "may be Neddy Nabbs isn't buried low enough in Friar's-lane church-yard—may be I didn't pray to God to put me wid him there." His burst of grief could not be counterfeit.

"And your mother?"

"Didn't I tell you she married the new turnkey,—a bigger thief than them he watches—just a fortnight after Dad was buried.—He wanted some one handy to the place, a *skin-adher*!—What could I do but cry my eyes out upon Neddy's grave?—They thrashed me, and I runned away from um. I thought to myself how lost you'd be to fetch the letters, so I coaxed Jim Cross the mate, my father's uncle's mother's son, to give me just a praty-mouthful an' a hole to cry in."

Our own anxieties were too urgent to permit our sifting the truth of this averment. The mate had gone ashore: the Captain said he had thought the boy belonged to us, but as Phil could make himself useful in many ways he promised for the present to take charge of him.

CHAPTER XI.

No one greets the way-worn stranger,
No one gives the warm shake hand,
No child laughs out so lightly
As at home in Erin-land!

WHILE we discussed his future destination Phil had slipped his fingers through the handles of our boxes, and looked resolute to follow us, with leave or without. A boat landed us at Tower-stairs. Our host led the way to an humble domicile which was situated near the landing place, and having ushered us into a dingy parlour, and introduced us to a matronly house-keeper, with a command to make us comfortable, he returned to his ship. We had thus leisure to consult together undisturbed,

In our previous discussions the chances of this late arrival had been overlooked, but it gave us time to reconsider our plans. We both felt an unaccountable misgiving as to the prudence of presenting ourselves at Dellival House without some indication of what might have followed the events related by Miss Berrington. This misgiving was quite distinct from personal timidity or diffidence. The cause we had in hand would be yielded up to no haughty or austere assumption ; if Lord Sanford would not protect his wife we were her protectors : no contemptuous aspect of stubborn or arbitrary authority should compel us to surrender our rights, not even to the superb dictatorship of Lady Dellival. The importance of my mission had elevated me above constitutional weakness : my nervous tremors were completely mastered ; I reposed with full security on my strength of mind, and Helen's gentle unobtrusive air, veiled a firmness of purpose not to be baffled by the most imposing aspect. But my aunt had, I know not how, by vague remarks impressed us with the necessity of mingling caution with plain dealing : therefore the result of our conference

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was, that as Miss Berrington must ere this have received Helen's confidential letter, we would trust to her agency for an introduction to Lady Dellival.

A note was quickly penned, but on consulting with the housekeeper we found it was too late for "the twopenny," and could not reach Baker-street before noon the following day. Here was another unanticipated mischance: we were utter novices as to localities and distances in the great metropolis, conceiving of London only as of Cork, and thinking Baker-street as attainable from Tower-hill as was the Mall from the Main-street. Helen faltered something of a messenger: the housekeeper glanced at a little Dutch clock that hung between two bookshelves, and hinted that her master's door was always locked before eleven: it wanted but a quarter: the post was much the readiest conveyance; she would undertake to send the letter by the earliest delivery.

When might we expect an answer?

Not before two or three o'clock.

We surveyed each other in blank dismay—to be in London and to be with Marion had

been identical in our ideas—but there was no help for it. Helen's sigh was echoed by Phil Nabbs, who had dodged the housekeeper, watching an opportunity to be useful—"Tis a pitiful place I'm thinking," said the boy—"How beautiful they bring things about in Cork! I banged our letters into post, and back I brought the answer ready made."

In a state of high excitement one hardly feels fatigue—But for Helen I would have adventured forth upon the instant. The little chamber I was shewn to, contrasted with the close ship's cabin, looked refreshing, and after hours of earnest meditation I at length slept heavily.

Voices outside my chamber awoke me. I recognised the housekeeper in a complaining key, and our host's rougher but milder tones. Eight solemn strokes, preluded by a running jingle, boomed from a neighbouring steeple. It was late, but our note was on its journey—I dressed myself, still revolving the propriety of a personal and prompt application to Miss Berrington, and descended to the parlour. Helen was there—we debated and debated, ever recurring

to the insupportable hours which must elapse before an answer could arrive, yet ever fearful of encreasing the term of suspense, or missing the result we prayed for, by indiscreet precipitancy—Our spirits began to flag—the day was cheerless—heavy rain pattered against the flag-stones of a desolate back-yard which the parlour window looked into. We had half decided on sending for a coach and following the note, when our host entered. The necessary interchange of thanks and civilities was a relief; he insisted on our sharing his breakfast, adding, “unless your friends are advised of your arrival.” The word ‘friends’ sounded strangely—our countenances, I believe, said plainly “we have none,” for our kind entertainer rang for breakfast, and strenuously overruled my wish to depart. I mentioned our having written to an acquaintance and the anxiety we felt for a reply.

“Perhaps you apprehend a squall,” he replied—“Then lay aboard somewhat to brace you—how is that delicate soul to weather a gale fasting?”

Thus exhorting us, he helped Helen profusely

to the substantial fare now spread out by the housekeeper, whose morning face looked cloudy as the day. Our host was too hungry and we too much abstracted to keep up a conversation. I took an opportunity of arranging for our passage, &c., and was about to make a deposit for Phil Nabbs until his destination should be fixed, when the housekeeper re-entered and enquired for the note—I stared at her aghast; it had, I thought, performed half its journey; the clock hand pointed to ten.—“Surely,” she resumed, replying to my look of consternation, “I saw you place it on this shelf last night. I should not have forgotten it, but the boy you brought here, stole away this morning before day-light, and left the door ajar. I was in such a flurry till I found he hadn’t robbed us!—my master bade me say nothing of the matter until after breakfast.”

The riddle was read—Phil had carried off the billet.

“Confound the urchin,” said our host, “he will lose it, or lose himself.”

I was not so apprehensive of these results, for I knew the boy’s shrewdness and loco-

tive powers. I also knew that however careless of turbans and such frippery inventions, Phil was an enthusiast in letters.—This however was a case of too much moment to be referred to the chance of an inexperienced Irish boy threading the mazes between Tower-hill and Baker-street, which our host enumerated to satisfy our eager questions. I was rather pleased that something had occurred to decide us on the course we had wished to adopt of proceeding immediately to Miss Berrington's. A coach was sent for, but a peal of knocks interrupted our leave-taking—The housekeeper bustled to the door—"Is Mr. Fitzgerald here?"

It was Papilio—perceiving me he waved his arm, and a carriage drove up—Miss Berrington alighted. The Captain respectfully withdrew, as our visitor sprang forward to embrace Helen. She seemed in breathless excitement—"How fortunate that you are equipped!—we must not waste a moment, not one moment—In, in," she added drawing Helen to the carriage—"whatever you may leave unsettled shall be arranged when I send for your packages."

Papilio put up the step and waited for directions. "Have you nerve?" said Miss Berrington, "can you bear—?" she hesitated.

"Any thing better than added suspense," said Helen.

"Then drive to Dellival House."

We moved on rapidly.

"Now," resumed Miss Berrington, pressing Helen's hand, "now I may take breath, but I must not use it to dilate upon the 'hundred thousand welcomes' I am overflowing with. Forgive my rudeness; the least delay might have frustrated a plan formed on the instant I received your note, a plan to rescue your sister from—I must not gloss it—from—a mad-house! That boy should be effigied in marble!—Do not interrupt me; I have hardly time to make myself intelligible. Your letter, which I received some days ago, was quite explanatory; it so increased my interest for Lady Sanford that, in contempt of freezing looks, I forced myself into the councils of her autocratic rulers. What I won by hardihood I retained by circumspection, assenting merely to extort amendments, and contriving to look careless while my

heart was throbbing. I wrote to offer you my house, anticipating the result of my last communication, but the present crisis puts an end to my protectorship. I will varnish nothing. Lady Sanford is worse; her child is removed to Castle Dellival. She has been hitherto guarded by females, but they declare themselves unequal to the task—firmer hands and hearts are therefore necessary, and her removal to a private asylum has been decided on. I hinted, warily, at the justice of consulting her family on the projected measure. I was silenced by an assurance that her derangement had its source in home associations. Their reasonings and proceedings seemed to me the reverse of Fielding's, but I dared not risk the vantage-ground I had acquired by opposing our sapient Doctor. My grand object was to procrastinate the removal until I could communicate with you. For this end, secretly, but ostensibly to spare their lacerated feelings, I became their negotiator with the overseer of the asylum, and racked my brain for hindrances. Alas! delirium almost ungovernable supervened to justify their harsh measure. I was harassed, nervous,

and at last gave in, still harbouring a vague hope of what has happened—your arrival. It was decided that Lady Sanford should be conveyed away to-night. Lord and Lady Dellival, with Lord Sanford, left town yesterday for the treble purpose of visiting the beloved heir, hiding their delicate distress, and escaping the parting scene. I was glad to get rid of them, and promised, with a secret reservation, to superintend the removal.

“This very morning I was perusing your letter for the twentieth time, to extract from it, if possible, some plea as yet unurged against this horrible incarceration, when Papilio entered with the astounding intelligence that the Cork boy, Phil Nabbs, had begged his way to London with a letter, which he would give to no one but myself. I soon obliterated the distance between me and our messenger-bird—Excitement clears the intellect—To introduce you as relatives of Lady Sanford would be to circumvent your purpose ; your authority cannot supersede a husband's, and our grand Inquisitor might pronounce your intervention dangerous : but the recent perusal of your letter, in

conjunction with your note inspired a project, that will, if you have courage, unite you to your sister.

“Doctor Oldstyle, is installed at Dellival House until Lady Sanford be removed. He is an author, and deems me, as a member of the *press-gang*, worth propitiating. While my carriage was preparing I wrote to inform him that I had just heard of a young person who professed herself experienced in the treatment of insanity, having managed, successfully, paroxysms as stubborn and violent as Lady Sanford’s. There was a brother too, I added, whose assistance might be had, if necessary : at all risks I would conduct my protégés to Dellival House, reckoning on his amiable tolerance, and in the event of a failure, I would co-operate without demur in the more decided plan. My statement of your capabilities was, I think, correct ; the methods which restored your sister once, may, be again effective—But we draw near ; have I done right ?—Do you concur ?”

“Concur !” said Helen, throwing her arms around Miss Berrington—I was half inclined to do the same.

"Hush!" said our friend," you must not shed a tear.—courage!—prepare yourselves—a few yards more and—But let me look at you; I wish, just for to day, that your face were as homely as your garb." She flung her own black veil over Helen's bonnet, arranging the folds hurriedly—"Now Mr. Fitzgerald, let me examine *you*."—a half smile combated the gravity of her countenance as she saw me shrink from the inspection—"I am not going to compliment you," she said, "though really were Lady Delival's scrutinizing eye fastened on you now, she could not repeat her offensive blunder—pray be ungentlemanlike if possible—put on your hat."

The carriage stopped; her brilliant color vanished—"Support your sister—recollect that every thing depends on self-possession—we are acting no nefarious part, and need not tremble."

While she was speaking we alighted, and were received into a spacious mansion; had it been the palace of the Cæsars I should have taken no note of its magnificence—I was only conscious that we ascended marble stairs, and traversed a pillared corridor. Miss Berrington preceded

us, closely following a servant, and motioning us on, as if she were afraid of some authoritative check—We entered a second corridor: paintings and sculpture were passed unheeded by—As we approached the termination of the gallery an elderly gentleman of grave deportment met us.

“ Ah Doctor !” said Miss Berrington, “ how well you look !—I was so sure you would concede, that I brought hither both my aids.”

“ Young lady you are daring ; think of my responsibility ; my professional reputation is at stake.”

“ I’ll write an ode upon it,” said Miss Berrington—“ Will you attend a meeting of literary *Lions* which I call next month ?—consent, consent—*le roi le veut !*—Have I your permission ?”—She half turned the handle of a door.

“ You are absolute young lady, but my reputation, my reputation !—mischief will ensue ;”—his voice sank into a whisper—“ she requires the coercing eye of Lady Dellival—her attendants are worn out.”

“ Well, well, we will relieve them,” said

Miss Berrington.—“how thoughtful you are!—let me spare you the trouble of dismissing them—You feel no apprehension?” she added, quickly turning to Helen.

“Not the least; but my brother’s assistance may be necessary,” replied Helen, with astonishing composure.

“Then Doctor,” said Miss Berrington, let us not appropriate too much of your invaluable time; this is your visiting hour; my carriage waits—will you use it without ceremony? There is a curious disquisition upon Mesmer’s magnetism in the right-hand pocket—Be sure you give us the benefit of your advice when you return”—She looked at her watch—“Bless me!—how late! I’ray attend the Doctor,” she continued, addressing the servant—“You will give me your opinion of that pamphlet Doctor—it may induce a treatise from your pen on these mysterious influences.”

Without further parley she opened the door, beckoning us to follow—We entered a narrower gallery—Miss Berrington turned quickly—“I bar interruption for the present,” said she drawing a bolt.

It seemed as if we were treading a different locale; the tessellated flooring, pictures, and statues were cut off; we descended several stairs. A low moaning sound broke on us. Miss Berrington stopped at the side door of a gloomy passage, and knocked. The signal was answered by a hard-featured woman: they conversed in whisper for several minutes—Helen grasped my arm; we followed our conductress through one chamber, through another; the door of a third was half open; Miss Berrington fell back, restraining us from entering, but giving us a view of the interior.

A female in a loose white robe was sitting on a couch in a recess of the apartment; her forehead was bound by a fillet which was spotted with blood; her arms appeared drawn back to a constrained position, her hair streamed loosely, her face was haggard, the lip and cheek without a shade of difference; her eyes were fixed and wide, but the lucid pupils seemed dilated and insensible: she looked as if occupied with a shadowy world, and intent only upon the objects within her mental sphere of vision—and this was Marion!

I turned to Miss Berrington ; she was weeping—I viewed again the ghastly figure—and this was the petted nursling whose joyous laugh shed gladness round us !—The beautiful outline, the bright redundant hair were all that told of Marion !—I would have rushed forward, but Miss Berrington caught my arm, and a woman who had been hidden by the window-jamb approached.

“ How is she ? ” whispered Miss Berrington.

“ Violent ; unmanageable all the morning Ma’am ; raving of people no one ever heard of —When we threatened her with the keeper she struck her forehead against the window-bar—you see those bars were useful after all—she would have dashed her neck through glass !—Mrs. Brice put on the straitener—so unruly !—no body can frighten her but Lady Dellival. Now indeed one of her trances is upon her, she is as quiet as a babe, but I wouldn’t pass another night without a keeper for—”

A deep sigh burst from the poor maniac.

“ That rude implement hurts her,” said Miss Berrington.

“ Bless you ! she can’t feel Ma’am, and if she did, what can one do ? ”

"Mrs. Brice will inform you of our arrangements," said Miss Berrington; "you may go; these persons take your watch to night."

"They should have stout arms then," muttered the woman with a shrug—"Better put her where a chain will save their labour."

I looked after the inhuman wretch wishing that she were not woman. Helen had fallen on her knees and buried her head between her hands. Miss Berrington, with her finger held up, seemed to mark the retreating footsteps of the guard; the sound died away; the beating of our hearts was audible—Marion's aspect remained frightfully changeless.

At length the bloodless lips began to move; an effort was made to disengage the arms; there was a rapid quivering of the eye-lids: Marion spoke in an under breath but with palpitating earnestness—"Take it Grace—hide it!—'tis *my* child!—they hold me; they won't let me touch it—Take it to the sheeling—Where's Slauveen?—give him the child—Walter won't come—Helen won't come.—Look Granny; they force my wedding ring upon my arms.—Oh! that was a weary bodement!—

"Tis crying: hush it Grace; the Marchioness will hear!"

She began a low wailing lullaby, interrupted by disjointed soothings—"Hush child!—the Marchioness will kill you; she killed me; she killed me in my sleep—life years ago.—Hush! Grace will nurse you; Grace will speak of your dead mother: no one else will—Poor aunt! uncle!—I love you all, even in my grave—Oh! babe will you come with me to Heaven?"

I was stealing towards her, but a wild scream transfixed me; the face I gazed on became convulsed, yet the eyes remained steadfast to their chilling glare; the voice grew sharp—the frame seemed to shrink and to collapse—the prayerful sentences were changed to heart-freezing ejaculations. Instinctively I closed my eyes; some one drew me back and held me firmly: when I looked up again, Helen was standing behind her sister.

Marion's exclamations continued to be poured forth with awful vehemence, while her eyes now rolled in pursuit of some impalpable oppressor.—"I will not be chained! I am dead—I *am* dead—look, there's the coffin—feel—

dead, quite dead—cold. Ye are mad!—chain me! can you chain a spirit?—Poor child! don't strangle it. Ah! save me, save me! don't bring the keeper!"

I struggled to reach her, but I was tightly held; a voice whispered—"Is this the self-command you promised?—Will you destroy both your sisters?"

I became dumb and passive, watching with strained eyes the movements of Helen. She gathered her veil in closer folds, and for a moment raised her clasped hands. Marion's face was pressed against an arm of the couch; her short thick pant was harrowing.

"Is it your pleasure that I should bind up your hair, Lady Sanford?" said Helen, in a feigned voice. Marion raised her head slowly; Helen stooped forward—"Will you be gentle if I remove these ligatures?"

"Very—very gentle indeed, Madam," said Marion, crouching before her sister like a frightened child.

Helen removed the bonds and made a signal that I should keep upon the watch; but Marion was perfectly docile. To my inexperienced

judgment a miracle seemed operated. Miss Berrington shook her head when I glanced at her—"Now Lady Sanford," said Helen, "let me bathe your forehead; you have hurt it.—First I will fasten up this hair."

"Thank you," said Marion; "it blinds me—Helen and I used to do that for each other once—we shall not do it any more—Will you wipe my eyes?—they are full of blood—I think my brain is hurt; it was the window-bar—these women are mad—they chained me—may I go home to-day, Lady Dellival?"

The hair was bound up with a steady hand; Miss Berrington brought a lotion from the outer chamber; Helen took it, and drew closer to her sister. Marion recoiled, but submitted. I now perceived that she was under the influence of extreme terror. The bruised forehead was gently bandaged—"Thank you Madam, thank you, Lady Dellival," said Marion, rising and curtsying—"May I see my child?—I promise not to touch him."

"Not to-day," said Helen; "you are not well."

"I am very well indeed; I only ask to look

at him before I go to Heaven—let me go to Heaven, Madam; this coffin is so dark.” She grasped Helen’s hand whispering—“ You know you killed me in my sleep-life, but I’ll not speak of it in Heaven—May I kiss my child ?”

“ Your wound disfigures you,” said Helen—“ you would frighten him.”

“ Should I ?” said Marion--“ Can you cure it?—the Doctor can; he cured my arm—look.” She drew up her wrapping gown; the wasted and discolored arm was eagerly displayed—“ Look—the mark is gone—bring him—will you ?”

I know not what impelled me, but while she continued to coax her sister I drew my hat over my face, approached, and deliberately took her hand.

“ The pain is here, Sir,” said Marion, hastily withdrawing her hand and pointing to her forehead—“ ’tis all here.”

“ You are feverish,” said I, imitating Helen’s precaution—“ you must sleep.”

“ No, no,” said Marion, pushing me from her—“ no sleep, no sleep; they *shall not* screw me in that coffin—no sleep, no sleep !”

I now perceived that leather straps had been affixed to this couch or rather cradle-bed ; their application was not doubtful—"Barbarous !" I muttered.

Marion's eyes were fixed on me ; between the quick, tremulous vibrations I detected flashes of satisfaction—"Very barbarous indeed Sir ; they bruise me so—they will not believe that I am dead—these are the fingers of a skeleton—whisper !—that woman," pointing to Helen, "that woman there in black killed me years ago—well, it was nothing ; I was the sooner happy, I went to Heaven—how beautiful !—I sat upon the mountain heath ; trees were planted all around ; a lake twinkled through the branches : the sky was bluish crystal ; through it I could see other Heavens, with trees and mountains too. The clouds were the spray of waterfalls ; there was no glaring sun, but a soft, kind, light.—I could sleep then—hush ! was in the trees ; hush ! was in the lake ; the fairy wings said ' hush !' Children used to chirp there, like birds—aye in the robber-castle—laughing children ; not like *my* poor child—he never laughs !—I loved that robber-castle Sir, 'twas built of glossy

leaves: good spirits haunted it; we platted rushes, and told ghost stories.—How happy we used to be!—A guileful spirit stole me from my Heaven-land; he left me here, alone—alone—to be tormented—Oh! it was cruel!” —She shook her head with an inward sob that made me weep like a child—“Look, Sir”—she drew me to the window; it opened into a gloomy Court encompassed with high walls—“Look; it is a prison—not a bit of sky, not a tree!—barred, like my uncle’s. I never wronged any one; I took no money from that man. They told me I was rich, but I am poor; very very poor indeed—I cannot pay the debt—may I go home to Heaven; may I Sir?” She fell upon her knees, raising her emaciated hands, imploringly.

“You *shall* go home,” said I passionately—a warning “hem,” restored my caution—“You shall go home Lady Sanford when you get well.”

Marion shook her head—“*He* promised me so often; you deceive me too.”

“I do not; if you will be patient and obey; you shall go home.

"Must I lie down in that coffin?" said Marion, shuddering.

Helen left the room. The quick eye of the poor maniac was turned to the door—"She's gone; let us steal away; she's gone to bring the keeper; he has a scourge; I am not mad; Lady Dellival is mad."

"That is not Lady Dellival," said I; "it is a person I have brought to make you well and fit for home; you shall not be bound or threatened any more."

"Speak again," said Marion; "to-day I like to hear your voice; yet I know you are not telling truth; nobody tells truth here."

"I am not deceiving you; that person is not Lady Dellival; she is here to nurse you; if you implicitly obey, you will recover strength enough to be taken home."

Marion seemed to ponder as if she were seeking a meaning for my words—she put her hand to her forehead—"Ah! I remember—here is pain, great pain—nurse me?—yes, my forehead—it is those people that are mad."

I heard a low summons, and led her to the ante-room—it had been hastily arranged by

Helen and Miss Berrington—there was no horrible insignia of coercion ; the window was ungrated—We laid the blameless sufferer upon a bed—she seemed absorbed in passive wonder. Helen lay down beside her and softly patted the wasted hand—the familiar touch acted as an opiate ; gradually the troubled spirit was becalmed : she slept profoundly.

CHAPTER XII.

What checks the sigh the anguished sob ?
What soothes of wakefulness the care ?
Subdues the murmur, calms the throb
Of worldly fretfulness ?

Tis prayer !

When by despondency oppressed,
And all around us seems to wear
The hue of hopelessness, no rest
The heart receives till stirred

To prayer.

I withdrew with Miss Berrington to the outer room. There was no want of external observance; this third apartment was the salon of a suite fitted up for Lady Sanford in a remote wing of Lord Dellival's splendid mansion.

I expressed myself freely and resolutely to our invaluable friend, and we arranged our plan of operations in perfect concert. I felt no awkwardness in discussing my position, considering myself warranted by the force of cir-

cumstances in furtively entering his Lordship's house. We had used neither false statement nor disguise to effect our purpose; we were actually, what we would have been in any case, the guards of Marion: to remove us from that post would require a higher mandate than Lady Dellival's. As to Lord Sanford, I held his authority in contempt: we had written to him; we had besought him to restore Marion to her home; he had forfeited his claims when he committed her to hirelings, acting against the prayers and remonstrances of friends the wisdom of whose treatment had been proved: if he dared to question our right of guardianship I would teach him that, cipher as he might consider me, I could defend my sister. Indignation spurred into activity a latent principle, the existence of which had been hitherto unsuspected even by myself; I was the natural protector of Marion, and I would maintain my position to the last extremity. Lady Dellival I would treat with the deference due to her sex, but Lord Sanford—Twenty hearts seemed swelling in my bosom when I spoke of the calculating self-love which had withdrawn him

even from the possibility of being affected by the deplorable situation of his wife ; a creature who had been fostered by more lavish fondness, more devoted adherents, than his pampered Lordship had ever known.

While I thus commented on my noble brother, Miss Berrington's countenance betrayed surprise and alarm : she tried to moderate my indignation, suggesting the fatal consequences to Lady Sanford, which might accrue from the *éclat* of an angry rupture. I assured her, with perfect sincerity, that I would avoid such a rupture, unless opposed in my inflexible resolve to become the future guardian of my sister—We were poor, but not poorer than when we had rejected his Lordship's overtures for Marion—he had betrayed her into a clandestine marriage and abandoned her—we had not resumed our title to protect her till his was forfeited ; no human hand should separate us a second time—poverty was no hinderance—we were satisfied to labour,

My companion's countenance now wore a still more wondering expression—she again urged caution and a temporary concealment of

our relationship. I replied that I would neither conceal nor avow myself; our noble brother had considered us too humble to be consulted: we considered him too contemptible for explanation—we could not indeed retort the outrage on our feelings—his Lordship was superior to the *common* sympathies of man. For Marion's sake, only, we would temporize.

"And would you do nothing for *my* sake?" interrupted Miss Berrington, with a flash of reviving archness.

"For your sake," I repeated warmly, "for your sake I would—"

"Put on woman's garb and spin—not a hank of flax, but a marvellous pleasant murder-tale—Ah! Mr. Fitzgerald, we must be sleeping partners in the firm of 'Romance & Co., at present—Will the time come when I shall laugh again with both eyes?'—Her April face was really divided between tears and sunshine—"Farewell," she added, quickly; "I must write to Fielding, for I have solid faith in his medicaments—I shall enclose the letter to Sir William, requesting him to forward it—Let me again recommend forbearance. Remember, if

you come to swords' points you compromise Fanny Berrington."

"That alone would be sufficient to restrain me," I replied, "but in cases of emergency how are we to communicate?"

"Leave that to me; I will invent a telegraph—Dr. Oldstyle shall acquaint Lady Dellival with our arrangement; it may lead her to remain at Castle Dellival until our experiment be tested—You will be served in this apartment by confidential agents—That bell reaches the attendants—since I have been deputed manager, my page of the back stairs also, by special warrant, has been made free of this retreat—Your boundary is the door you saw me bolt—Farewell—I want to look light-hearted, so I must not peep into that chamber."

Days, weeks, passed anxiously—the balance now declined at hope, now at fear—Marion's paroxysms grew less and less frequent: a flickering intelligence sometimes played over her countenance, but the vacant stupor that succeeded was the more appalling—A sudden laugh would make our hearts thrill—such as resounded when she was the usher of mirth—the next

moment a gaze blankly divested of all meaning would check the current of our blood. Helen adhered strictly to the treatment formerly pursued by Fielding, but the results were not so satisfactory—Marion's physical powers revived, but her mental functions seemed incurably impaired—Her arms acquired something of their former beautiful proportions, her complexion became dazzling and transparent—she looked like a waxen effigy of Marion. She would sit between us and describe her sojourn in Paradise, tracing out the features of the glen; stop suddenly, as if she had lost her way; survey the window, look into the dreary court, and fall into disjointed babble—To home her memory was faithful; she pictured it minutely, and recurred to it with ever encreasing fondness: it was blended with the Heaven she prayed to be restored to: but she could not recognise the sister and the brother who had been her partners in that home. This total obliteration of our lineaments from her remembrance, deeply affected me—She had lifted Helen's veil one morning; the action was too sudden to be prevented; she passed her hand over the features,

sighed out, Lady Dellival, and fell into her listless dreaminess.

We now addressed her without disguise: it was trying to hear her speak to us of ourselves once I ventured to say, "Marion I am Walter."—She looked at me angrily, repeating several times—"Walter is in Heaven"—That night she had a frenzy fit.

I slept upon the couch she used to call her coffin. Helen never left her sister's chamber: her constancy remained unshaken; not great for an hour, heroic for a scene, but steadily, mildly, christianly, enduring. At midnight I have often heard her prayer ascend with the full flow of piety and resignation—there was no appeal to justice or compassion; no murmuring at a fiat blamelessly incurred; but a trustful, hopeful, supplication—"Thy will be hallowed and be done!"—It seemed the holy breathing of a sanctuary: the one sister in communion with her shadowy world, the other with Heaven.

Dr. Oldstyle's visits were short and formal: we never tried to comprehend his pedantic saws, or to develope the judgment indicated by

the solemn waving of his head. Miss Berrington was our good genius, the medium of our correspondence with Ireland, our ready and efficient aid. To prevent our voices reaching Marion I was accustomed to meet her in the passage, and there to talk over our mournful uncertainties. We had preconcerted a signal by which she intimated whether she came alone. I often listened at the door of boundary, apprehensive of some precursor of my fashionable brother, but our quiet continued undisturbed. His Lordship had a supplemental conscience which forbade him to expose his tender nerves—he owed it to himself and heir to guard against the rude shock of an encounter with his *beloved* wife, by remaining at Castle Dellival.

One day I traversed the passage more impatient than usual for Miss Berrington's signal—we had observed a change in Marion—after having sat many hours of the previous night in that moody lethargy implied by a dull, never varying gaze, she had abruptly seized my hand and pressed it to her forehead, bidding me observe it was quite well.—“You promised, you promised,” she reiterated,—“Home—

home—my child is gone before me—home—home !”

The tenacity of her memory on this point astonished us ; with persevering importunity she recalled my promise, looking into my face with the piteous and incessant ejaculation “home, home !” She grew feverish ; her pulse beat high, while her aspirations for futurity continued to be mingled with longings for the home on which her Heaven seemed suspended. Helen had always persisted in treating her as far as possible like a reasonable person : the wisdom of this management was now obvious—Marion listened meekly ; a glimmer of comprehension stole over her countenance while Helen discoursed of the passage homeward, of precautions and arrangements ; impatience, she observed, would only retard these arrangements. Since then Marion had been mute and tractable.

It was to impart this circumstance to Miss Berrington, and to request her advice that I was led earlier than usual to my listening-post. I had long revolved the probability of Marion’s restoration being effected by a return to the

glen : every spark of intelligence she displayed was associated with this ; the strings of other recollections were snapped or tuneless, but the chord that vibrated to *home*, though sad and wild, was still melodious. Yet how loth are we to try that *last* resource which, failing, leaves us hopeless !—I paced up and down the passage revolving the ventures and contingents. Miss Berrington had once vaguely hinted that Lord Sanford's legal right to arbitrate might be interposed to set our guardianship aside—the mere suspicion of his possessing such a power was torture !—I felt immovably persuaded that if Marion were transferred to such an asylum as Miss Berrington had pictured, she would sink into fatuity. We would rather pray for her translation to Heaven !

Such fears as these were crowding fast, just then, to quicken my impatience. Minutes became important, I worked myself into a ferment of expectation. At last the door opened —“ Papilio !” I exclaimed, turning from him angrily. The boy without speaking presented a letter. With an irrepressible movement of

vexation I tore it open: the contents were hurried and almost illegible.

"Lord Dellival has written to Dr. Oldstyle; he professes himself disappointed at the result of our experiment, pronounces Lady Sanford incurable, *commands her removal*, and summons the Doctor to resume his attendance on the infant heir. Lady Dellival, you perceive, is quiescent—*mais on voit les pâtes du lion*—and Lord Sanford piously resigned. I leave London within an hour, for Castle Dellival, with the hope of obtaining a respite, or making a diversion: and may be absent a few days.—Use the interval with diligence, and without the slightest reference to *my* involvements; it is better *I* than *you*, should measure weapons with Lord Sanford; my *passado* shall strike home and yet not draw one jot of blood; if they cite me on charges of burglary and abduction, Pat has taught me how to prove an *alibi*; if they bluster and bring me in an accessory before the fact, I shall threaten to display them in my next *roman*.—Therefore, I repeat, take no concern for my involvements. Helen will muster

courage ; *your fierioso* tendencies need the curb. I have established my telegraph ; it will convey your signals to my Mayor-domo in Baker Street, or to Captain Wood's your some hours' host on Tower Hill. I saw the latter yesterday and made arrangements for his procuring you a passage, when advised, in some commodious vessel ; there is one, he says, with fit accomodations, preparing to sail in a day or two—Sound a retreat while Marshal Berrington diverts the enemy. Doctor Oldstyle being requested to inspect his baby patient *after* the removal, I have wheedled him into inverting the order of the day, and attending me—Thus is your course made tolerably free, yet its success hangs upon a hair. My confidential Mayor-domo is instructed to obey you, and my telegraph needs no instruction. I pray for you, and shall have no peace until I hear from Helen."

The vein of pleasantry running through this letter was obviously intended to remove any scruples we might feel on the writer's account—every thing depended on energy and promptitude—Dr. Oldstyle's return would circumvent

the plan so skilfully arranged—I gave Helen the letter, and withdrew to the outer room to reconsider the project of escape—It appeared legitimate and feasible: Lord Dellival had commanded the removal of my sister from a house into which she had never entered with our participation—we only presumed to change the mode of her removal, and to place her beyond the chance of wounding the family susceptibilities—I was ready to give Lord Sanford any satisfaction he might require.

My mind being firmly made up I wrote to Captain Woods and arranged for our voyage—My letter finished, I bethought me of the telegraphic agent I was promised, but Papilio did not, in my opinion, justify our friend's commendatory notice—I doubted his trustworthiness: we had detected him in tattling to our attendants, and suspected him of loitering on important errands: even now he had impertinently intruded himself instead of awaiting my orders; and, while I wrote, amused himself with blowing into the faint embers of the fire—I did not like confiding in him, but there was no alternative—"Take this letter," said I, "to

Tower-hill and—" The boy turned round—
" Phil Nabbs !—impossible !"

" *Bathershin* !" said Phil—" may be tishn't I
—I'm not swopped, though my clothes be—
You took me for *hoocteen* did you !—I wondered
you warn't glad to see me—sure I bobbed at
you."

I could have embraced the child—There was
music in his voice—even his artless, inoffensive
freedom was pleasant—Out of Ireland any
thing Irish to an Irishman becomes endeared :
my recognition satisfied Phil, and the sight of
my letter made his cheeks glow.

" Who took the letter to my lady in a jiffy ?"
he exclaimed, in reply to my injunctions ; " sure
I'm Philly Nabbs."

" But this place is so crowded," I observed ;
the streets are—"

" Streets !" echoed Phil—" crowds !—did you
never walk up Blarney-lane and Bandon-road
o' market days ?—This place ershishin !—'tis
nothin' to Cork."

" And you will bring me an answer before
sunset ?"

"Before sunset is it!—any *brineogue* could do that—Just tell Miss Helen that our letters goes by *me* again: that's enough!"

Our little Mercury buttoned up the packet, and with a nod of comic self-assurance vanished.

Helen acquiesced in my arrangements—When Marion slept we talked over the precautions necessary to be observed—I would leave my uncle's letter for Lady Dellival, with one from myself, to be delivered after our departure—We wrote to Ireland and to Miss Berrington: in the midst of my solitudes I felt an honest heart-ache at the thought of parting from the latter, without even a farewell—Helen shed tears at the supposition that she might never see our faithful, cheerful, friend again—The expressions that conveyed to her assurances of never ending gratitude seemed to me cold and feeble: my store of words was inadequate to transmit the fervency of my sentiments for her.

We had calculated that Phil Nabbs had only reached Tower-hill when he returned—The answer was satisfactory—our berths were secured, with due attention to the comforts of an

invalid ; the vessel was to sail the day after the morrow at one o'clock p. m. and Captain Woods would meet us on the wharf.

Our whole solicitude was now directed to prepare Marion for the change—We accustomed her to walk up and down the passage, and, after a cautious survey, ventured to lead her into the pillared gallery—Singular associations, some vivid, some half torpid, struggled in her mind : she invoked the marble figures as fettered spirits—After a time other recollections struggled forward: the scene appeared to grow familiar: she pressed her finger on her lips, scanned apprehensively the corridor and staircase, and pointed to a door superbly panelled—I opened it: a succession of magnificent apartments spread out before us—Marion traversed them on cautious tip-toe, motioning us to do the same—The painted ceilings, rich carpets, mirrors and candelabra which caught from Helen and myself an involuntary gaze of interest and wonder, were passed, by Marion, not with her usual vacant listlessness, but with the air of a person grown indifferent to accustomed splendours—Her whole attention seemed direct-

ed towards an apartment half seen through the open door valves of the range ; it seemed the termination of the suite ; a gorgeous canopy, festooned by marble cherubs exquisitely carved, depended from the arch of an alcove ; part of the folds had fallen from the angels' grasp and hung around the pillars of a fairy bed ; columns of white marble supported the recess—The luxurious appointments of this dormitory drew from me a cry of admiration.

"Hush !" said Marion, "he is asleep."—She lifted up the canopy—"Gone !" she exclaimed, clasping her hands—"gone !"

"Gone home," said Helen promptly.

"Did they put him in a coffin?—did they bruise him?"

"No," said I, "they put your child into a carriage, and a carriage shall come for you to-morrow, and we, too, shall travel home."

She laughed with such a glad, spontaneous, burst, joy flashing from her eyes ; she looked so like the gleeful mountain girl she once was that Helen's firmness gave way ; she sat down on the baby couch, and wept.

"Poor thing, poor thing !" said Marion ;

“you shall not stay here to be scolded—I’ll take you home with me—Don’t cry poor thing”—she kissed her sister—“come come ; I’ll take you home with me.”

It was the first time she had betrayed the slightest mark of fondness for either of us.

* We returned to our own apartments : but for the occasional clapping of a door in some remote quarter of the mansion, we might have thought it had no other inmate than ourselves. That night Marion was the only one of us who slept.

CHAPTER XIII.

*"My boy, my Arthur, my fair son!
My life, my joy, my food, my all the world!"*

At length the eventful morrow broke ; a slowly brightening sun-beam streaked the floor ; our heavy vigil was concluded.

Through the medium of our trusty courier all had been arranged ; it was yet early ; there was no remaining task to occupy the tedious hours. I wandered through the rooms, the passages, the corridor ; I encountered no one. Marion was restless too ; she imitated Helen's actions, wrapped herself in the travelling cloak we had provided for her, and took, without her

wonted symptoms of repugnance, the nourishment we tendered. She saw there was a prelude to some change, and watched us suspiciously.

We had no intention of giving our proceedings a criminal appearance by absconding secretly; neither would we risk their being baffled by revealing them prematurely. At ten o'clock I rang for our attendant, and ordered a carriage to be called. The man looked at the signals of departure strewn around, but made no remark. Phil was deputed to observe whether our commands were obeyed. Flushed and palpitating, Helen busied herself in equipping Marion, who passively submitted, looking up with an unconscious smile. The travelling-cap chosen for its warmth and lightness did not please her; she snatched it off, asking for Helen's bonnet: when gratified in this she took the veil, flung it over her sister's head, and curtsied several times, bidding her farewell.

"I cannot bear this Walter," whispered Helen; "will she never know me?—Let us walk into the gallery."

We led Marion on between us. At first she

spoke, almost intelligently, of the carriage she was going in, and of the ship; but when we would have conducted her beyond the door leading to her child's apartment every trace of coherence vanished. She raved wildly, reviling us as 'stony spirits,' and insisted on taking her infant home. They only who have struggled long to compass one great end, who have found themselves in view of it, and then in danger of defeat, can picture our despair.—Helen, pale and gasping, pointed to a clock and held back for a moment, but with sudden inspiration she flung open the door, took Marion's hand, and rapidly traversed the range of rooms. I hesitated: Phil was crossing the side-corridor towards our apartments—the carriage waited. Half frantic I sprang after my sisters; they were already in the canopied chamber. Marion, clinging to a pillar of the bed, implored Helen to restore her child: soothing was vain, and even the talismanic word which had hitherto enthralled her—"One little moment!" she sobbed, "one little moment—let me look at my dead child—Oh! my babe! my babe! come back to me, come back to me!"

A cold dew started to my forehead.—The clock chimes fell like death-strokes—I looked through the suite of rooms expecting our little herald: my strained gaze took in a person slowly advancing—the crisis was at last arrived—my pulse beat calmly; I hastily drew together the folding-doors of the infant's chamber, and stood before Lady Dellival.

“You have spared me the trouble of dismissing you, Sir,” said her ladyship; “your attendance has been rather forced on us than solicited; it has had, as we expected, no other result than that of postponing a necessary measure. Lady Sanford has been long pronounced incurable: other testimony to this judgment was not required. Miss Berrington's conduct is indefensible: *your* zeal doubtless had a prudent aim.—Pray accept this pocket-book.”

I slightly put aside the hand she extended—“Your inferences are so candid, Madam,” I replied, “that it is a pity to prove they are erroneous; the mercenary aim you imply is confuted by the fact that I am at this moment

prepared to relieve you, not only of myself, but of the charge you find so burthensome. Lord Dellival has commanded the removal of Lady Sanford: if I do not obey him to the letter, it is because I consider her family possess a more legitimate claim to her guardianship than the keeper of a lunatic asylum."

"*You consider!*" repeated Lady Dellival. She surveyed me from head to foot: an indefinable expression superseded for a moment the cold stateliness of her regard.—Perhaps a passing recollection of our former interview perplexed her: but she was instantaneously self-collected.

"I presume to dissent from your opinion, Sir: *I* consider Lord Sanford the legal protector of his wife. The carriage you have ordered waits—depart with your associate quietly; else"—she laid her hand upon a bell—"You will act wisely in avoiding the odium of exposure."

"If there be odium, Madam, it will not attach to me. Lady Sanford's malady has been aggravated by injudicious treatment;

even here there are authorities to whom I can appeal; she is not beyond the management of friends."

"Friends!" repeated Lady Dellival—"Does your medical diploma authorize your intrusion into the private apartments of a nobleman?—does it license you to class patients of Lady Sanford's rank among your friends?—Sir, I contend with you no longer."—She pulled the bell.

"Then, Madam, I will address myself to Lord Dellival—this letter"—I selected my uncle's from the packet which I held—"But your ladyship may not condescend to read a poor man's prayer for the surrender of his child. If Lord Dellival refuse, Lord Sanford *shall* listen, and *shall* reply to me."

A servant entered; Lady Dellival motioned him to retire; she took the letter and bent on me a fixed and earnest look—"Shall reply," she muttered—"there is something singular in this—Miss Berrington did not mention your name—this letter.—Who *are* you, Sir?"

"A stranger, Madam—destitute, and almost friendless, but thankful that I have been reared

in a soil propitious to humanities. As the brother of Lady Sanford I may be permitted to class myself among her friends, and if nobleman be identical with gentleman, Lord Dellival will not consider my painful visit an intrusion."

While I was speaking Lady Dellival had opened the letter, but I could perceive that the action was merely mechanical. "The brother!" she ejaculated, making a step towards me, and instantly receding. The marble surface of her features was disturbed—some chord of charity was touched.—I was mistaken—she had no feeling, or she was so accustomed to suppress it that apparently she had none, for without the slightest mark of courtesy to the brother of her sister-in-law, she walked to the further end of the apartment. The result of this interview however was too important to defer to ceremony. I followed her.—She seemed intent upon the letter; her back was towards me, but as I approached her, I thought I could detect the hard drawn breathing which evinces keen emotion.—Her form seemed to heave and to dilate.—Might there be a relent-

ing?—Might my uncle have lighted on the avenue to her sympathies?—I stood irresolute—In the pause loud sobs and distracted ejaculations reached us.—Unable to master my excitement I struck my hands together and exclaimed, “Oh! my poor sisters!”

“Sisters!” repeated Lady Dellival, abruptly turning—“Where?”

Her tone and aspect expressed dizzy perturbation—she trembled as if she stood on creaking ice—the action of her mind seemed suspended as she gazed upon the folding-door.

It was flung aside—“Walter,” cried Helen, “help me, help me!”

Marion had thrown herself upon the floor—Helen endeavoured to raise her, but she resisted, sobbing out—“Oh! cruel, cruel, ye have no pity!—Let me look at my dead child.”

“Alas!” said Helen, wringing her hands, “it were better with Heaven’s will, that we were all three dead—There, my own dear Marion, there.” She clasped her sister’s head against her bosom ejaculating—“If our mother could look upon us now!”

Marion's struggles all at once abated—she gazed upwards with a changed expression, and yielded to my support—I followed the direction of her eyes—Lady Dellival was standing opposite us; she had resumed her cold, spectral, self-possession; but it struck me that she was labouring under some dreadful anxiety, which she endeavoured to mask.

“That spirit there is watching me,” said Marion in a whisper; “’tis the spirit that haunted my sleep-life—steal away softly; ’tis a statue; it can kill!”

Helen too was observing the stiff and motionless figure with a sort of awe—“It is Lady Dellival;” I whispered, “she knows who we are, and refuses to let Marion go.”

Helen unhesitatingly advanced, and addressed the Marchioness—“It is not possible Madam that you can hold out against our tears—Had you ever a sister, a brother, most dear, and most unfortunate?—let their memory plead for us—and not for us alone—hearts that may soon be cold are throbbing for the issue of this moment—palsied hands are held up in

prayer!—If Marion be incurable we can love her still—can others? can her heartless husband?”

Tear followed tear down Helen's cheeks; her lips quivered with anxiety—“Think, Lady Dellival, how soon the proudest intellect may fail—oh! while you have power succour the unfortunate!—Will you sentence our foster-parents to an old age of loneliness, ourselves to an awful prison? if you deliver Marion to the horrid doom they have assigned her, you deliver us; we have nursed her through dreary night-watches, we will not desert her now—a hope has dawned—a last resource—Marion is unaccustomed to this splendour, her shattered mind turns to her mountain-home; let her go with us Madam, and may you be favored in that final doom which the good and guilty shall one day meet!”

The workings of Lady Dellival's features during Helen's speech were inexplicable; she did not utter a word; her eyes were rivetted upon the pleader's face with even startling earnestness, although she evidently made an effort to recover her chill monotony of aspect.

In the ardour of entreaty Helen had approached her, and, nothing daunted by the majestic demeanour of the Marchioness, had extended her hand in an attitude of simple but energetic supplication.

"We are orphans, Madam, we are bound together more strictly by misfortune; had Marion been left to our mutual affection and our quiet home, this might not have happened—Lord Sanford suffers through his own act; he was forewarned"—Her voice trembled—"There is a blight upon us all; our mother—"

"Your mother!" ejaculated Lady Dellival: it seemed as if a statue spoke—"your mother!"

"She died," continued Helen, gasping for breath, "she died in—a mad house!"

A burning crimson dried up Helen's tears; the confession thus wrung from her inherent pride seemed to elevate rather than degrade her—"Yes Madam," she continued loftily, "she died abject and benighted, but her spirit is now calm and clear, triumphant and immortal!—so will Marion's be—that which *here* seems dark and unequal, will shew wise and beautiful hereafter. We do not murmur—God forbid;—We

only wish to pass our little span of mortal life together—May our Marion go with us?”

As if raised above the recollection of earthly injuries Helen clasped Lady Dellival's hand imploringly. The Marchioness leaned towards her; she almost brushed my sister's forehead with her lips, and uttered in a voice scarcely audible—"she may go."

"Bless you Madam, God bless you!" cried Helen, fervently.—She caught up her veil and hastily enveloped Marion, who, cowering and terrified, was clinging to my arm. As we passed Lady Dellival I bowed with cold politeness: she instantly drew herself up to frigid dignity, and with a resolute air turned from Helen's simple reverence.

In a few minutes we were seated in the carriage and undergoing the rebuke of Phil, fulminated from the coach-box—"In the name o' Nic didn't ye see me beckonin' an' bobbin' to ye through the shew rooms?" he expostulated—"Tis a mercy if the wind waits!—Sure ships arn't stage coaches!"

Our transit to the wharf was rapid, thanks to Phil's incitements to the driver. We had

scarcely alighted when we were summoned to embark: our blunt friend was anxiously expecting us: his arrangements surpassed our expectations: we had a cabin to ourselves and diligent attendants.

Marion was exhausted; she lay down without a murmur, and I went on deck to bid farewell to Captain Woods, for whom a boat was waiting. Phil Nabbs was piling together the chief objects of his care—"Give a look to the luggage between whiles Sir; a boy must have as many eyes as a potaty to match them Lunnun chaps; *Irishers* arn't up to um—How you'll miss me wid our letters Sir!—won't you bid us a good bye then?"

Amazed I turned to survey him; he was clutching his little cap, his eyes glistening through tears—"But you come with us," I exclaimed.—"what!—give up your country!"

"Cork is like my heart's blood," stammered Phil—"but I'll never look at it again while that upstart turnkey thief swaggers in dad's place—Would you do us one good turn Master Walter Sir?—I *gother* all thim coppers *honest*—will you take um, an' buy a tombstone for poor

Neddy's grave?—'tis such a weight on me to think he's lyin' bare and bleak widout a bit o' writin' nor a name, nor nothin'!"

I saw the boy's soul was in the beseeching eyes he turned on me, so I took the little treasure-bag and promised. Amid the pressure of my sorrows I recollected Phil's petition; a simple epitaph records the worth of Edward Nabbs.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE KEENE-THE-CAWN.*

Ochone ! he is low, he is low !
 The grass through the gray stone is creepin' ;
 Walter darling ! oh why would you go
 So young to the grave ?

Ochone ! 'twas your cheek that was pale !
 An' your eyes had a pleasure in weepin' ;
 Cushla 'athore, 'twas the dark sorrow-tale
 That dug your young grave.

I the narrow house lonely you lie !
 The green oaks around you are groanin' ;
 No rain falls so fast from the sky
 As my tears on your grave.

The night raven's croonin' " ochone !"
 The rushes an' rills make a moanin' ;
 Oh, Walter mavoorneen, my own
 Poor boy's in the grave !

I HAVE no written records of the subsequent fortnight. Our second voyage was undiversi-

*The death-wail

fied, except by changes from hope to apprehension. Marion was more tranquil but more feeble ; her hand was always feverish, her pulse rapid, and her aberration assumed the character of settled despondency. She never uttered her husband's name ; she spoke of *us*, of her child, of " poor aunt and uncle," of Grace, and all the loved familiars of the glen, but the person who had drawn on her the bitterest misfortune seemed expunged from her remembrance, or he was identified with some guileful phantom whom in her wayward moods she would apostrophize. Gradually she became so gentle that a child could govern her, but her mind seemed eternally separated from earthly things. She would sit for hours with upclasped hands gazing on the clouds, in imaginary communion with the spirit of her child : nothing could shake her conviction of his death : we perceived that our efforts to undeceive her did but alienate her from *us*, and we desisted.

As to Helen and myself, all our affections merged into one great interest. To effect Marion's restoration, or to encrease her little sum

of happiness, was the ever-prevailing motive which guided our proceedings; no thought of future exigency was suffered to impede plans which had *her* comfort for their object.

At last the vessel glided between the watch towers of Cork harbour, and anchored in that unrivalled bay. We landed at a romantic little point near the Cove, and to avoid the bustle of the town I hired a cottage on the beach, that Marion's strength might be recruited. Helen, trembling at her own words, bade me observe the supernatural brilliancy of her sister's colour. We consulted a physician; his presence so disturbed the patient that his visit had no beneficial result.

Our foster parents were apprised of our arrival, but they deemed it essential to the success of our experiment that the meeting should take place in the glen. My aunt's letter was full of hope—"Fitzgerald is much better," she wrote, "and so revived at the prospect of seeing you that he speaks of setting off to-morrow; but we must travel slowly, so don't flurry or fatigue yourselves, children. I have many,

many, things to tell you, but shall reserve them till we meet. You'll be glad to see the bearer of this."

It was Slauveen. Slauveen loved us all, but Marion was the child he had carried on his back when himself a child; the pride of his boyhood; the sharer of his enthusiasm for tales of yore, and fairy-land. Marion had been his errant maiden, the wee, wee, doughty Amazon who had interposed her puny shield between him and the parlous fury of Quinilla. All these flashings of young times seemed pouring from the eyes of our domestic Paladin when he besought us just to let him *take a glimpse on her*. We dared not at the present risk his introduction, but when she reposed, half slumbering, half entranced, we let him look at her. Her loveliness at this time was of that shadowy and ethereal character which in 'angel visions' is portrayed; the long fringes of her lids hid the most desolating change; she was truly a shape of Heaven. Slauveen, rooted to the earth, gazed as upon a hallowed effigy, touching his forehead, and muttering disjointed prayers. He lifted up a tress of the

luxuriant hair which fell around her, and passed it along his brow, as if it diffused a holy unction—"She's not dying though," he uttered in a low voice, eager it would seem to repel a terrible suspicion.

The next morning we commenced our journey. Slauveen upon his trusty steed attended us; he arranged our route and halting posts; sedulous and experienced, we felt all the value of his services in the unfrequented tracks we entered on. Marion's daily encreasing debility obliged us to travel slowly. With the dawn of the third day we reached the rude defile nick-named "murdering glen;" it was a gray, spring morning; lichens, significant of home mantled the chasm; sounds grew familiar—the rush of wood streams, the clamour of the rock-birds, and the tremulous plaint of the mountain goat. To me these signals of the wilds were silver-voiced; tremors of sudden pleasure filled me. An opening in the high walls of the ravine gave us a passing view of the colossal battlements in whose girdle lay our fairy lake, like a huge granite-cup fed by cataracts.

Marion leaned forward, a gleam of consciousness, too fleeting to inspire hope, gave a momentary animation to her features; when the carriage passed the gap, and pursued its way along the naked avenue of rock, she fell back on Helen's arm and closed her eyes.

Through occasional slits in the ravine I continued to strain my eyes for peeps of the open landscape; no prominent home-mark however presented itself, amid the sublime confusion of fractured rock and dizzy precipice, above which branches of birch and pine waved like suspended banners. The chaotic sea of petrification glanced on me at intervals, resembling fragments of a picture, while the tedious rumb'ing of our vehicle heightened to very painfulness my throbs of eager longing. At length, emerging from the pass, we commenced a slow descent, just as the sun rose above the hills. Our road was flanked on one side by a barren moor, on the other by a merry rivulet that brawled and leaped, and foamed along its course of broken rock, dwarf under-wood, and bog-moss.

To spare my sisters the fatigue of alighting
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it was necessary to make a wide circuit round the basement of a hill which lay before us at some distance. Marion slept profoundly. I softly opened the carriage door, and nodding to Slauveen, who in truth required no spur to watchfulness, I walked towards the hill, intending to meet the carriage at the other side. But at the other side the path trended across the heath to a second acclivity that appeared familiar. The carriage was not in view, and the prudence of announcing Marion's approach suddenly occurred; I set forward briskly. After a little while I met again the stream that I had parted from; it glided from a thicket and came singing to my feet, bubbling over stepping-stones that in summer time connected its banks, which were fenced by an irregular bordering of stunted arbutus and birches. The music of the ripple, the airy whisperings, the loneliness, the hilly amphitheatre that hemmed in the prospect, were identical with my homeward recollections. I crossed the rivulet by clinging to the antlers of a solitary dwarf oak, and ascended the second hill; the perfume of broom and early heather was invigorating; my

steps were winged, my heart throbbed; I broke my way through thistle and entangled underwood, rounded a well remembered point, and found myself between two pinnacles of the mountain ring that held my isle, my ocean lake, my boyhood's home.—There they lay canopied with azure, calm, bright, and beautiful, reposing amid the self-reared towers which intimate the terrific strength of nature.

A laugh of childish ecstasy burst from me—life's gangrene was forgotten—I had quitted the glen with a persuasion that I never should return; yet here I was again, and all looked as I had left it, and we might live on, perhaps, in that romantic valley, the which to love appeared a condition of my existence. My buoyant feeling however lasted but a moment; one saddening image interposed to check the ill-timed joy; the canker at my heart resumed its dolorous tick.

Will Driscoll's bark lay at anchor just beneath me; its little pennon, stamped with the name of Wallenberg, fluttered gaily, and its thread-like cordings were traced by an unerring limner in the bay. The ivied walls of the

ruin seemed to rise out of the untroubled water ; the trees of the opposite headland also were reflected. I recognised the shadows, although, from my position, the point itself was not discernible. Every creek, and rock, and rill, had its recognitory throb ; the cana grass stretched up its glossy waving head into the breeze ; the mountain fern expanded its fantail leaves ; far in the distance the cataract, whose thundering hiss had been my lullaby for many a winter's night, glanced from its cloudy ledge and fell in one perpendicular unbroken leap.— But there was a dearer object than all these as yet unseen—the dell that held our cottage ! Adversity's wholesome buffetings had made me bolder ; I descended a precipitous rock-stair which in my coward days I used to halt at, and alighted on a bank a few feet above the bay. A goatherd's track brought me to the projecting crag from which I had looked into Sanford's chamber on the night that closed in the most fatal day of my existence.

I expected to have seen my aunt's chamber wear a habitable look, but the shutters were closed, and I continued to survey the little

tenement, anxious for some sign of human occupant—all was however still, and to appearance quite deserted. It did not indeed wear so desolate an aspect as when I last beheld it; the advancing season had refreshed the paddock; some careful hand had renewed the rustic palisade; the old pear-tree, that had been scotched by want and winter, extended its remaining branches, rich in budding leaflets; but no glad bark, no grunt, or cluck, or bray, saluted me. The byre and farm-yard were despoiled of coop and manger; Breesthough's kennel was a shapeless relic; the stall had vanished, and the duck pond lay stagnant beneath its surface of green ooze—"Poor Quinilla!" I exclaimed, led to the scene of the immersion by one of those abrupt mutations of thought which not unfrequently conduct to merriment from the deepest melancholy—Alas! what misery had arisen from that simple accident.

I was buried in reflection on the strange materials from which our sorrows spring, when suddenly the heart-language of an Irish keene broke the drowsy hush; it was chaunted by a

single voice ; the tear-awakening pathos, deep vibratory tone, and distinct articulation, could not be mistaken ; I descended hastily, but was checked in my flight towards the singer by indescribable awe at recognising the death song of the Geraldines.

Our national dialect lost nothing of its idiomatic force by the wailer's powerful delivery. She introduced into her requiem the identifying names of our sept, coupled with a lament made more emphatic by that intonation, peculiarly Irish, which lengthens out the final syllable. As I drew near, the name of Walter was woven into the funeral song ; but not even that awe which may be supposed to chill a man's blood at hearing his own death-wail could restrain those gushes of affection the sight of Grace Mc Quillan drew from my inmost soul. She was seated on a rude square stone that capped a turfy knoll called by the glen-boys *Cromleach*,* and without pausing in her dirge, drew the filaments from a skein of flax that girdled her waist.

* A Druidical altar.

Put your hand on his cheek, 'tis as solid as stone !
Put your hand on his heart there's no breath !
Oh pull down his eye-lids, Oh, Walter ! ochone !
How crushed is the eye-ball beneath !

The whirring of the spindle now formed an under music to her funeral hymn ; she was too intent on her employment to notice me, but, at the repetition of my name an ominous snapping of her thread caused a suspension, and the thick breathing with which I laboured to ascend the mount, became audible.

Rapture should be defined, *an Irish welcome home*—Grace rushed to meet me with a shriek of exultation—“Walter *ma bouchal, ma chree, ma cushla* ! come here to me, come here to me !” —This she reiterated as if I were not close enough, though hugged in her embrace—“Are you the company the Madam bid me look for *avoorneen* !—God bless you boy ! how grown you are !—a beauty every bit of you !—a fine presence of a man !—sure I got every thing ready when the note come, never thinking who the guest was. And how is every skreed of you *asthore* ?—and the Madam and the Master, and my fair-haired jewel, and my black haired ?—

Poor Katy too!—Don't speak a word, don't answer me; you're tired sure—you're hungry—Ten *hunder* shames on me to be talking that way!—eat a bit *eroo*; then you'll speak to us."

She drew me into the dear old cottage—Alas how changed since the merry spring time, just two years back, memorable by the visit of Madame Wallenberg!—Yet Grace had made it look as *cozy* as she could—I recognised the sheeling *furnitory* with the remnants of our little stock—I ran up stairs to my own room: my childish feelings were renewed: I kissed the panel that had served as tester to my bed: a dry ink-horn, and a rusty coat that hung behind the door, were greeted with like affection—I looked from my little casement at the flinty cone of Sugar-loaf until old times came back again, and I half expected the tap of Katy's sweeping-brush, which used to warn me that her office was commencing—At last, with a flutter of cowardly emotion, I descended to the study—Grace had spread out a repast in this favorite apartment, and her store of comforts was arranged imitative of the order which formerly prevailed: rush cushions, and white

fleeces, pillowed my uncle's chair: there were scraps of patch-work carpeting; hassocks, and joint-stools of Granny's build: the window panes were spotless, the book-shelves not quite naked, for my old friends Bunyan, St. Brigid, and the Martyrology were propped to the perpendicular by tattered piles of *dying speeches*, which Grace had bought for two pence a pound at Ballygobbin.

"The Madam's note come yesterday," said Grace, pouring out her rennet—"Take a modicum o' whey *agrah*—you're hot—She bid me look for company: I had a feel it might be some one.—Ah! Walter, dear! tis sore to eat one's bread alone!—The sadness come over me to day so strong that I thought I'd croon a keene or two, to drive it off—Wouldn't I have gone to see you long ago but' for turning this small penny for the Master?"

She took a purse from her bosom-pocket, which, if duly filled, might have ransomed half the race of Ham—"Here's the earnings of my sixteen lonesome months at this end—and here's the price of odds an' ends you left behind you at this other end—You'll take it to the

Master darling; I didn't like to send it by Slauveen—And I have news for you besides—sure a grand lady come ferreting hereabout last autumn—But you don't eat—your flush is gone—you look—What ails you Walter darling?"

"You must prepare yourself for other company Grace," said I—There is some one coming who—and my aunt and uncle, Grace; I thought they were arrived, and—"

Shout after shout, yell after yell, arrested my words—Struck with the danger of such outcry should my sisters be its object, I rushed from the cottage, but was relieved on perceiving that it issued from a little fleet of boats which was nearing the point—Every cabin in the glen gave up its inmates as the cry "The Geraldines, the Geraldines!" rent the air—The cry became a roar when they espied me—He who had not a *skreed* of hat threw up a turf-sod—"Crom-a-boo—hubbuboo—screech boys—Walter aboo!"

The boat which contained our foster parents had not yet rounded the islet, but their precursor, Katy, long before she landed had shouted forth the news, and every skiff upon the bay followed in the Siren's wake—Two sturdy lasses;

with locks unsnooded, legs naked to the knees and arms to the shoulder blades, dashed into the water, and interlacing their blushing palms bore Mrs. Mulligan to the shore.

"Glory to the saints ! you are here before us, Master Walter," exclaimed Katy—"We haven't time for compliments yet awhile though—The Misthiss *would* come this roundabout water way in spite o' one—Look to the lading, Sir—there's books an' beds an' things—that opprobrious Breesthough gives more bother than his ugly nob is worth!—Don't drown the dog," she screamed ; "sure he's no water wag-tail that he'd swim!—bring him in your arms boys."

"*Paugh a vollagh** childer ! is her worship to walk over ye ?" cried the piper Conlan striking up 'the conquering hero.'

Apprehensive that Marion might arrive during this tumult, I hastily told Grace the cause of my disturbance : her countenance fell, but with native tact she harangued her liegemen—They listened reverently, expanding their eye-

*Out of the way.

brows and muttering "*thru* for ye—to be *shoore*"—When the word was given each flew to his allotted task, and the cottage had assumed something of its former aspect even before my aunt and uncle landed.

Our meeting was solemn ; we were absorbed by fears of the approaching trial-scene : the thousand questions which in other circumstances would have been precipitated merged in the earnest one—"how is she?" I thought on her celestial calmness and answered "better," but a countervailing apprehension forced the tears into my eyes.

My uncle said "thank God!" seated himself in his arm chair, and brushed away the drops which the sight of his old seignory had called forth. My aunt wiped the moisture from her spectacles and looked up a thanksgiving ; but Granny's keen eyes were fastened on me ; their expression so accorded with the wave of her head that a cold thrill shot through my veins. I explained my motive for having preceded the carriage. The crowds of expectants scattered in little knots upon the paddock shewed that my caution had not been super-

fluous. Grace threw the casement open and delivered a monition in emphatic Erse: the groups dispersed, exhorting one another to *spancel* their joy; but many a straggler was observed to hide behind a point of rock, and many a chubby imp peeped through the hedge which parted the heath-land from our little territory.

We could not converse; we could only look upon each other, pace the room, stand still, and listen anxiously. The day had grown unseasonably sultry. I wheeled my uncle's chair to the window, that he might enjoy the mountain fragrance, and left the cottage.

A steep pathway overlooked the tortuous road chosen by Slauveen in preference to the more frequented one, which at that time involved the bustle of a market-town, and of a passage across the outer bay. I hastened up this path towards a hillock termed "the look out," but the post was occupied by the blind minstrel and his guide. The banner made by Marion to adorn his pipes was rent and faded. He knew my step—"Tis the Geraldine oge,*"

* Young Geraldine.

said he.—“ ’Tis the Geraldine *bacack* *” said the boy.

At that moment I caught sight of the carriage, still at some distance. Slauveen was in advance, and the slowness of the approach indicated his alarm. My nerve forsook me. I sat down at the old man’s feet.

“ They told me she was coming this way,” said the beggar; “ they told me the sickness of the heart was on her: an old tune will do her good Sir—where’s *machree* Miss Helen, Master Walter?—hard was the day we parted from her!”

Slauveen saw us and rode forward; when he reached the hillock he dismounted, bidding me step on Lanty’s back and wait for the carriage at Fairy cross. “ The blinds are down,” said he, “ and that’s a sign we mustn’t make a clatter—*hoosht* Johnny! for your life be quiet!”

I halted at the spot prescribed; which was within a few yards of the dell. The carriage soon approached and stopped. At Helen’s signal I cautiously opened the door: Marion reclined in a sort of dreamy stupor, but there

* *Lame Geraldine.*

was a quivering of the folded lids that did not augur sleep. I lifted her from the carriage and, assisted by Slauveen, bore her up the dell into the cottage. A perfect silence was observed: even Helen was not welcomed. Marion's trance-like immobility continued: we laid her on a couch which Grace hastily arranged in the very corner of the study that she used to occupy. We watched the fluttering motion of her lips, but they shaped no word.

Helen ventured gently to part the tresses from her forehead—it had the icy gloss of marble, but the glow of living beauty was on her cheek. Her hands, true to their constant habitude of invoking things celestial, were clasped upon her bosom, which was shrouded by an unrestrainable profusion of glittering ringlets. Her resemblance to a Madonna prostrate at the cross, which I had seen in the picture gallery at Lord Dellival's, was striking, even more striking than her likeness to her mother's portrait. A stream of radiance slanted to her feet. Something in the aspect of the sky brought to my recollection the evening I had read to Madame Wallenberg the drama of

Antigone. There was the same ruby tint; the same liquid effulgence was thrown upon the mountain slopes. A beautiful variegated moth flew into the room and lighted upon Marion's hair. I stooped to remove it.

"Don't wake me," she whispered. "Ah *do not* wake me!—'tis phantom-land; 'twill vanish!"

I dared not brush the insect off: we stood so still and motionless that the murmur of the wavelets breaking on the headland was distinguishable. At length the face we gazed on gradually settled into the calm of sleep. Helen stole out of the room, and returned habited in her mountain garb: I adopted the hint and, with a glow of satisfaction, as if righting an old friend, I put on my rusty coat. We took our stations beside the couch: our friends placed themselves a little more aloof, and Slauveen, outside the window, kept assiduous watch. The hum of flies, the ripple of the waters, formed a lull so grateful to the jaded mind that I, too, became abstracted from this world and its vicissitudes. The whistle of a blackbird roused me: alarmed I looked at Marion: the sun was struggling with the twilight hour; a parting

halo fell upon her brow. I thought her eyes were slowly opening; I watched them with feelings no language can describe. Helen dared not turn her head, but her side glance was fixed, and the silent shudder, the heaving of her frame, shewed her terrible emotion.

"'Tis angel music!" said Marion, half raising herself upon her elbow and veiling her eyes—" 'tis so like home!—I must not look—I must not look—'twill vanish." She fell back.

"Marion," said Helen, "Marion, will you drink?"

I gave her the beverage that Grace presented me—she drank eagerly. "Home is in the cup!" she said, "home is in the sound!—the air is full of home, my heaven-home:—oh, I am so happy!"

She folded her hands again, and lay as if absorbed in calm and concentrated devotion—it is impossible to picture the seraphic composure of her countenance. Suddenly she unclosed her eyes—the wild unearthly look had given way before the rush of a thousand fond remembrances. She gazed at us, and sprang up with a cry of rapture. "Uncle!—aunt!—

Grace!—Oh my own Helen, my own Walter!”

In a moment we were kneeling around her, sobs of joy and apprehension mingling.

“I knew I was in Heaven!” she exclaimed; “the phantom-crowd is gone. Oh! I had a dream—who nursed me all this time?—Brother—sister—I dreamed my uncle was in prison—was I in prison?—Aunt,—dear, dear Granny!”

With palpitating haste she pressed us in turn to her heart, murmuring—“I am so happy, so very happy!”

Grace was the last embraced; Marion strained her doting friend close and closer, with infant fondness. Alarmed at this excitement I unlinked the fingers gently—there was a flutter round the mouth—the eyes were fixed—I felt the pulse—I pressed my hand against that faithful bosom—She was dead!

CHAPTER XV.

THE GERALDINE'S DEATH SONG.

Speak low, speak low ! the Banshee is crying—
Hark to the echo !—" she's dying—dying !"
What shadow flits dark'ning the face o' the water ?
'Tis the swan of the lake, the Geraldine's daughter.

Hush ! hush ! have you heard what the Banshee said ?
Oh list to the echo ! " she's dead—she's dead !"
No shadow now dims the face of the water—
Gone is the wraith of the Geraldine's daughter.

The step of yon train is heavy and slow ;
There's wringing of hands, there's breathing of wo :
What melody rolls over mountain and water ?
'Tis the funeral chaunt for the Geraldine's daughter.

The requiem sounds like the plaintive moan
Which the wind makes over the sepulchre-stone—
"Oh ! why did she die ?—our heart's blood had bought her—
Oh ! why did she die ?—the Geraldine's daughter !"

The thistle-beard floats, the wild roses wave
With the blast that sweeps the newly made grave :
Stars dimly twinkle, hoarse falls the water ;
Night-birds are wailing the Geraldine's daughter !

Who can lay open the depths of real anguish ?

who can represent one throb of genuine grief? feeling is beyond language; the heart, alone, can register its own bitterness.

Years rolled away before I could record the death of Marion; and having recorded it, I weep over the page as keenly as if I had just seen Marion in her grave-clothes, just heard the heavy funeral tread, the moan which burst from her old retainers, the childish sobs, restrained with a sore effort lest a word of the burial service should be lost, when her coffin was lowered, and 'dust to dust' was solemnly delivered. Every circumstance of those scenes is ineffaceably engraven—joy's season is erased, but the implement that inscribes our griefs, cuts deeper.

Marion reposes in the church-yard of a village sanctuary that rears its humble spire a few miles from the home she loved so faithfully; her husband would have removed her to the mausoleum of the Dellivals, but he dared not aggravate the resentment we expressed at the mere hint of such an intention, by insisting on its accomplishment.

I continue my narrative at the request of one I love as well as I loved her—loved! did I say?

—her image never leaves me ; but now that selfishness is hushed, more chastened meditation represents that playful spirit in her eternal home, full of joyous devotion, clasping her innocent hands and rapturously exclaiming “oh I am so happy !”

Our grief was boundless : for many days we seemed to have lost all susceptibility to kind influences ; a feeling of unspeakable desolation, stopped the current of our sympathies—we looked upon each other as strangers, and mechanically performed our customary duties ; but there was no *soul* in the services we tendered. To indulge in reciprocal soothing and endearments seemed treason to the dead. Our attached domestics evinced the same sullen grief.—“The core of my heart is gone,” said Grace ; “what do I care for now ?” Shauveen said nothing, but if interrupted in his moody contemplations he would throw himself upon the earth and weep.

It was the returning weakness of my uncle that moved the pulses of our better nature—The funeral day had been too much for him—We flew to his bed-side—the glazed eyes he

turned on us expressed a fondness, the more earnest from its short suspension." Children kneel with me," said my aunt; "Let us pray that our minds may not become hardened by affliction—an early death is often the reward of piety—*Her* foot is on the peak—The Heaven she longed for opens—Marion has eternity to rest in!"

Prayer seemed to renovate my uncle; he dismissed us, appointing the following day for a solemn communication.

That night Helen summoned me to a long and melancholy conference. The scene of it was the sleeping chamber which the sisters so many years had occupied. It was the first time that Helen had entered it since her return; our vigils, uncheered by affectionate communion, had been kept together near the dead. I paused at the door, doubtful of my fortitude.

"Come in," said Helen, in a low voice, "come in Walter; we have been estranged too long."

She was sitting on the bedside, braiding a tress of Marion's hair. I looked on in silence; a word would have choked me. When finished

she hung it on a reading desk beneath which the sisters used to kneel. I sobbed; she turned to me, and said emphatically;—"Do you love me brother?"

"Love you Helen!"

"Do not blame me," she resumed; "I thought *my* love for you was lessened: but it is not; we will remember we have each other to live for, and friends, dear friends, to work for. It is easy to lament, to echo groan for groan, to shew a sullen patience. Would Marion have indulged this selfish wo? She would have mourned either of us as keenly—affection was the essence of her being—but the survivors of our little band would not have been neglected. Walter we must quit the glen. It is no Eden now to us; when will the traces of *her* steps be worn out?" Helen paused, and pressed her fingers on her closed eyes, but tears stole beneath the lids and fell upon a hand almost as thin as that we had kissed for the last time, the yesterday. "Labour we must Walter; but not here, not here! It is presumptuous to test the spirit too severely—one cannot toil with a breaking heart. Is there a

spot in this glen not linked with Marion?— Every dingle has echoed to her laugh; I could as well work upon her grave!” A burst of grief interrupted her. “I can labour, I can beg; but not here, not here?”

This emphatic decision gave me a mournful satisfaction; our feelings were in perfect unison—could we live on serenely, amid haunts which would incessantly recall the lovely shadow of happy years?—

“We will quit the glen,” said I, “we will return to our former course of labour.”

“I think I can earn enough for all,” said Helen—“We must, indeed, return for awhile, to our kind friends in Cork—for—I feel it, Walter; the freshness of thought and intellect is blighted—what could I write of *now*,—but the impulse may revive, or something may come round to help us.”

There was a tone in the last words which rung upon my heart; she tried to suppress her grief, but perpetual sighs shewed the inward aching. The night breeze rushed through the little casement; it seemed lamenting with us. At length we turned to other

subjects, and tried to elevate ourselves above this wreck of hope. We spoke of our city pupils, arranged our plan of conduct, and mutually promised to take into the pursuits of common life, a serious and inflexible perseverance. After having touched on the communication my uncle had announced, with thankfulness that the worst was already known to us, we separated.

But before we left the glen I had to search for a memorial, the loss of which had often filled me with regret; it was the medallion given me by Madame Wallenberg. I had missed it many months before, and had a vague recollection of having left it in my crypt within the ruin, when I was so suddenly called off on the day of Marion's flight. Early on the morrow of my conference with Helen I took my way to the old castle, devouring my tears as I thought upon the merry throng once assembled there. The blind minstrel's tunes were tingling in my ears—Alas, hushed was that voice most rapturous in applause! I ascended to the oak-room; Helen was addressing her little mountaineers and commending

them to Grace McQuillan, who sat in stern sorrow, her arms folded in her apron, and listened to the farewells with an unmoistened eye. When the pattering of the little footsteps ceased, she arose, made us a low reverence, and was following the children with a stoical tread—But Grace loved those she loved, better than herself;—with a sudden burst of penitence she turned and flung her arms around us.—“Go then,” she said, “go and God be with you! would I keep you here to see you wither? Helen, *machree*! Walter!—I’ll weed the grave alone!”

The serenity we had been struggling to acquire was overborne by this artless touch; in unutterable anguish we received her passionate farewell. I leaned against the dismantled window-frame, observing her slow retreat across the causeway, half tempted to abstract myself from the world’s turmoil and remain a tenant of the wilds. The landscape was rife in the glow and freshness of an unruffled morning; it seemed a duplicate of joyous days; incidents long gone by, were pondered, and dialogues rehearsed with friends I no more

hoped to see ; there was a spectral resurrection of former happiness, nothing real but the scene—A purple dawn pierced by rays of gold ; the bay dimpling and brightening ; an eddying beat of innumerable wings, like pulses in the air ; twitterings and chirpings ; the gush of brooks, the dipping of a lazy oar ; mountain cones wreathed with liquid amber ; a distant sail advancing from airy indistinctness into the red of sunrise.

“ Just such a morning was it ! ” said Helen, “ the wedding morning ! *She* and I were here arranging Johnny’s throne—How beautiful she looked ! and laughing like a merry child—it was the sweetest laugh—so full of life. Oh, Marion ! but for those you loved so faithfully, I would abide near your cold bed, and weed it till I shared it ! ” A low, choking sob broke her utterance.

“ We will leave the glen to-morrow,” I exclaimed.

“ *To-morrow,* ” repeated Helen, in a tone slightly querulous. The accent of complaint from her was so unusual ! I looked at her attentively, and recoiled ; the dark expanded

eyes moved languidly ; and the hollow of the worn cheek was marked by a circle of ominous red ; she had been tried beyond her strength—" We will go to day," said I ; " I will prepare our friends this instant."

" Yes, to-day," said Helen, " to-day—I would be useful while I can—the fund I thought exhaustless is—Oh blessed hand which gave the means of rescuing *her* from a neglected death-bed !—from cold attendance, and rugged looks !"

" There is comfort in that thought," said I.

" There is," said Helen ; " her tomb is *not* in the strangers' land. May it please Heaven to bear me up until—until—I would not leave you, Walter."

Her words renewed my agony ; the firm-set nerve of magnanimous endurance was shaken ; Helen wished to die ! a terrible foreboding fell on me—*I* should be the survivor ! desolate, stricken, hopeless ; *I* should be the survivor ! The hand I took was feebly trembling—some countervailing train of thought might induce tears ; I hastily imparted the object of my visit to the ruin.

"A gift of Madame Wallenberg!" said Helen—"our mother's picture! and like Marion!"

We entered the closet and lifted the window-lid impatiently; a cry of regret escaped me; the medallion was not there—I was still groping in the crannies of my treasure-keep, when I became aware that some one was ascending the ivy ladder; Slauveen stole through the crumbling frame. "'Tis this you're looking for," said he, presenting the medallion; "I thought so—when last I come to see my mother I found it here among old strays—the sight of them that's gone stifled the thoughts of every thing; else I'd give it up before."

Helen seized the medallion and gazed upon the portrait; the tears I longed to see streamed copiously.

"Well, Sir," said Slauveen, "I'm going—I'm not made o'rock that I could stand it—Poor mother has a different feel; she likes to wander up an' down, an' keene a broken song, an' crush her heart with climbing the old cliffs—'tis *rasonable* enough if one could die in earnest; but to be dyin' inch by inch!—I love you Sir! but I can't stand it."

"We are going too," said I.

"Back to Mrs. Bullock's to kill yourself by scraps!—I'll list, in hopes I'll have the luck to get the grief shot out o' me."

"Will you forsake us then, Slanveen?" said Helen.

"Never! if I thought you'd live Miss Helen—but you'll die too; your *Fetch* was sittin' in the sheeling chimney-nook last night—you vanished when we spoke to you—an' Master Walter—you'll all die, so I'd like some quicker stroke to kill me than the heart-break."

"You have a mother," said I; "she looks to you for comfort; 'tis cowardly to wish to die."

"How can a body help it, Sir? would any one feel grief if they could help it? tell me *that* now. There's some could bury kith an' kin without a grip o' sorrow, but I'm not o' that pleasant quality.—Go back to Cork indeed! an' see you dwindle, dwindle, cooped up in a garret.—The Bullock's are decent folk in their own line, but they arn't of ould blood."

"It is your dislike to Miss O'Toole," said I.

"Misthiss McCarty you mane! she's mar-

ried sure—an' the Captain's home; an' his eyes like gravy spoons, full o' Miss Monimia, talking huge high o' the throats he cut.—A butchering *spithogue*! Miss Quinny indeed, now her mind is asy, she's not so remarkable spit-firish."

My boyish horror of Quinilla had long yielded to the pressure of more forcible ills. I was glad that she was happy, but I had sympathetic chords of feeling with Slauveen in his leaning to 'ould blood.' The figures he had conjured up, the McCarthys, the blustering O'Toole, heightened my repugnance to the course of life we were called on to resume—Our long intercourse with Miss Berrington had revived the hours of intellectual enjoyment we had passed with Madame Wallenberg, and had strengthened my predilection for that society, which, under all its bearings, possesses indescribable fascination. I felt the warmest gratitude and esteem for my worthy benefactors, I would do any thing for them, willingly, but live with them. Every feature of my city servitude stood out in repulsive array—the hot, unhealthy room—the drudgery—the bois-

terous merriment—in short the absence of all the refining faculties. I condemned myself for the loathing sensation with which I regarded the prospect, and was obliged, for my acquittal, to catch at the philosophic absolvment of Slauveen that I could not help it. Helen too—I knew she felt as I did, but Helen possessed that noble concomitant of genuine courage, self-command; Would this magnanimity of mind sustain the frame?—She had been accustomed to the freedom of the wild bird—to studies sublimating and enlivening.

“Now there’s Katy,” resumed Slauveen, seasonably interrupting my musings, “Katy wo’n’t fret a thraneen at goin’ back. That don’t argufy Katy have no nature; she cried enough for——But Katy is come o’ the Red-shanks; a cross-breed of Irish; she haven’t the *rale* soft-heartedness; a shanamone with Molly Green, and Mrs. McCarthy’s finery, will soon put her upon the pig’s back again—I have no pride in nothin’ now—for even Lanty—even Lanty, Master Walter, is choused of his old corner in the stable!—they have bought a vagabone new horse to drive the jaunty-car!”

"Poor Lanty!" I ejaculated, involuntarily.

"'Tis the way o' the world Sir; old stagers turned adrift.—I'll stick to the comfortless craythur though; many's the time *she* rode him, an' she no bigger than a Leprechan."

The sound of rapid oars checked the heavy sighs that followed this apostrophe—Slauveen mounted the window-seat—"A boat makin' for the point Sir; company come to see the glen. *Wisha* we care for nothin' now, but the grief! the grief! I don't wish to get over it! If I thought I'd live, I'd shoot myself. They're landin'—The saints be good to us!—"Tis—no, tisen't—yes 'tis though."

"Who Slauveen?"

"Trash! what a fool I was to b'lieve, my eyes—Katy is up—the smoke dances—'tis—no, is it?—I wish the sun wouldn't come betwixt us;" He contracted his orbs to see more distinctly—"No—why but it is though!"

"Who?" I demanded peremptorily.

"The *Frowleen* as I'm a sinner! The little corporal!"

"Berga Schmidt!"

"Her *rale* self, or somethin' so much the

morul of her that it makes me trimble—Did you ever see a *Fetch*, Sir?”

“The changes in Helen’s countenance terrified me; hectic and deathly paleness alternated so rapidly that I thought she would have fainted.

“Did you say that it was Berga?”

Wide-eyed wonder, fear, caution, and a gleam of tragic joy, were mingled in the singular look which Slauveen fastened on me, while he replied, “It might be her *Fetch* indeed—I wouldn’t take my oath it wasn’t Berga neither—may be it may then, ’pon my word—You’re as pale as a spirit why!—Fetch up your heart, Miss Helen.”

“*Is* it Berga?” gasped Helen.

“It might be her twin-sister—I just begin to think it is—she never moved her head though, that’s a token ’tis the *rake* corporal—but I’ll be off in a wink, an’ bring you word of it.” He sprang to the window-ledge, nodded mysteriously, “For your life don’t stir a moment, Sir,” and disappeared.

I knew not what to make of his extraordinary gestures and contradictory averments—We

remained in utter silence, listening greedily—
After the lapse of a tedious interval we again
distinguished the plash of oars nearing the
mole—the keel of a boat jarred against the little
quay—some person landed—“It may be a
casual explorer,” said I, “let us escape.”

CHAPTER XVI.

"The glories of our birth and state
Are shadows, not substantial things ;
There is no armour against fate ;
Death lays his icy hands on kings.
Sceptre and crown
Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crooked scythe and spade."

BEFORE we had half way traversed the outer chamber the sound of advancing footsteps drove us back to our retreat. The pace was not that of a loitering unadvised explorer—instinctively I threw my arm round Helen and stooped forward—" 'Tis Fielding !" I ejaculated.

I could not control the impetuous impulses of affection—I flung myself upon his neck—I

could scarcely persuade myself that it was really Fielding—He had made a hurried movement towards Helen, but checked himself abruptly; there was a union of all the fine affections in the frank beaming eyes, in the half expostulating, half entreating offer of his hand. Helen yielded hers, but as if repentant of some emotion foreign to her mourning contemplations, she withdrew it hastily, sobbing her sister's name.

"Oh Fielding!" said I, "you are too late—had *you* been—"

"Do not aggravate your grief and mine by erroneous fancyings of what might have been," said Fielding, in a tremulous voice: "no human aid could have availed Lady Sanford in the latter stage of her decline; yet I would have flown to her Walter, you know I would, had I received your letter or Miss Berrington's—the latter followed me through Germany, halting for weeks at various posts, and only reached me on the eve of my return. *Your* letter, by an unaccountable omission, remained at my town house, where it was addressed, and you had left London before I received it—Are

you satisfied, Helen, that the slightest intimation of her danger would have drawn me to your sister, even from the pursuit of an enquiry on which my very existence hung? Are you satisfied Helen?"

Helen made a powerful effort—"We require no assurance of your friendship Mr. Fielding."

"Friendship!" repeated Fielding;—"my affection can no more change its essence than its object; as I *have* loved you, so I must ever love you Helen."

Helen looked at him incredulously; "I also Mr. Fielding, am unchanged; principles once revered are still supreme." She extended the medallion towards him. "It is my mother!"

Fielding gazed upon the portrait until his eyes were dimmed. "And this is Julia Derentsi!" he faltered; "her fascinating child resembled her, alas, too accurately!" He paused and regarded Helen with devotional tenderness. "Julia Derentsi was not *your* mother Helen—Marion was her *only* child."

I heard no more; a whirring of ideas, a doubt of what I had heard, or that I had heard

it—such was my state of mind: the most distinct of my conceptions shewed how much the mind had deviated. I conceived that Fielding was deceiving us, and I rushed through the apartments with a vague purpose of questioning my aunt, whirled, as it would seem, by some spirit not my own. But before I reached the causeway a dizzying sensation overpowered me—trees, skies, hills, all created things seemed flitting away: I grasped at the projecting fragment of a buttress, and sat down to recover myself. Ere long a murmuring of voices reached me—I looked up—Fielding was standing beneath the window-arch of the oak chamber and supporting Helen; the beaming intelligence of his fine countenance had never shone so cloudless; Helen's eyes were raised to his with a fervid expression of confidence. I caught some words of their discourse. We were the children of my father's second wife, of Margaret Wallenberg—Marion was our half-sister.

I arose and staggered homeward—a dreamy confusion assailed me, a clashing of sensations. Strange to say, I was averse from displacing the image which, as an attached, indignant son,

I had so long consecrated : yet the venomous fang which had murdered sleep relaxed its gripe—the interdict was removed—I blamed myself for a sudden thrill of joy—Helen would be happy—but Marion was dead !

I reached the cottage—I encountered no one; the morning's meal appeared forgotten. This had happened more than once of late ; thus the absence of the breakfast array did not surprise me ; but something unusual must have diverted Katy from her customary household observances—the chairs were in confusion, and the shutters, carelessly parted, had half closed. An appendage, emblematic of its wearer, recalled the vision of Slauveen—the satin muff of Berga Schmidt lay upon the table ; beside it something glittered—it was a ring—it was the signet ring of Madame Wallenberg—the signal that she had promised should announce her death.

The sight of an embroidered glove broke on my sad soliloquy—"The muff is Berga's—but the glove—"

"That glove is Madame Wallenberg's," said my aunt, throwing open the door of the study.

In a moment I was clasped to the heart of her I so much revered. I could only embrace her and stammer—"Fielding tells me—am I to believe?"

"Believe every thing that Fielding told you," said the Baroness. "Noble young man!—comforter of my gallant son;—You, Walter, will replace my poor Derentsai—you and Helen—ah! I hoped—But alas! alas!"

"Marion's short, stormy day is over," said my aunt, striving to look calm,—“The long, bright day is entered on.”

"My good friend," said the Baroness, "It is for myself I grieve—I did not lament her mother, though I loved her—none knew how much—Mother and daughter ye are now united!—Shall I so rejoice over *my* daughter!"

"Dear Madame Wallenberg be comforted," said my aunt; "all will end well, please God!—it is not for poor mortal eyes to pierce the secret crannies of the heart. She may not be quite so bad as you—and I myself indeed—have thought her: some compunctious corner might be hid by stiff-necked pride: penitence isn't always shewn by tears: hearts often bleed when eyes are dry."

My aunt's faltering voice and forced composure were a commentary on her aphorisms. Madame Wallenberg, meanwhile, with a Judith step and a countenance of lofty indignation, was pacing the room.

The door slowly opened, and Berga entered—her eyes rested on myself—she courtsied reverentially, and, without once relieving me of her indefatigable gaze, she marched up to the Baroness and announced that her sleeping chamber was prepared.

"Lie down awhile dear Madame Wallenberg," said my aunt; "I'll send Helen with your breakfast: you'll comfort one another—come among us when you wish—only dear Baroness, don't do one thing, will you? don't take my children from me yet—not quite yet."

The Baroness viewed my aunt a moment, and then addressed me. "Walter, another course of life is opened to you; a course which it is indispensable you should enter on—I must return to Germany—you and Helen will accompany me. Do not be alarmed—you shall not be separated from your foster parents—were you inclined to forget their claims I would renounce you. You know not yet the half of

what you owe them. They rescued you from the orphanage which springs not from the grave, which comes not from a parent's death, but from a parent's guilt. The sentiment due to them is wordless; they adopted you; your name attainted, your fortune confiscated; disowned by your mother's family—deserted by that mother, who for her ambition broke the ties of nature, the sanctities of woman; passed from the unhonored sepulchre of one husband to the pomp and titled grandeur of another, without even the poor interval which decorum marks!—Margaret, there was a previous registry of callous indiscretion against you, sufficient for a life”—

Madame Wallenberg's voice from the solemnity of an appeal had gradually changed to the tone of sustained, emphatic, reprehension.

“ 'Tis the poor boy's mother you are speaking of,” said my aunt, imploringly.

“ That title belongs to you,” said the Baroness, “ not to the deserter of her children, not to the usurper of her cousin's rights, not to the oppressor of her cousin's daughter—

When I think of Marion and her mother can I gloss the errors of Margaret Wallenberg?"

I tried to interpret the last sentences, but the web of thought seemed shattered—The Baroness abruptly turned from us, and threw back her head, as if impatient of her humble friend's remonstrance.

"For the sake of Christian charity if not for the sake of these dear children, you will forgive her," resumed my persevering aunt."

"My good friend," said the Baroness, waving her hand rapidly, as if to silence intercession; "Margaret cares not to be forgiven—I have seen her—cold, insensible, remorseless!—We had not met for twenty years—she stood before my anger, resolute in arch-pride, unmoved as yonder rock—can you wonder that I too was remorseless?—Every act of her selfish career was recapitulated: from her hardened disregard of her unfortunate cousin, and her union with Lord Gerald, through the courses of her unnatural desertion of her children, to her second union. I rehearsed them all, even to the last, the crowning point—not a nerve quivered—nay, when reproached as

the cause of that fatal duel, which sent to an early tomb her brother, her father's favorite child—she was roused neither to anger nor repentance; her features were as tranquil, her air as unbending. I had just buried my brave Derentsi, the only son her turpitude had left me,—with his dying breath he pardoned her—her father never would retract his malediction—Margaret was as indifferent to the forgiveness of the one, as to the inflexible renunciation of the other—not a tear started when I described the closing scenes of two brave men whose lives she had embittered; not a throb of penitence was evinced when I gave her their bequests—I am thought unyielding, but Margaret—!”

“Yet who knows but the scorching fire that drieth up the veins might be feeding on her all the while,” exclaimed my aunt, evading the displeasure which her obstinate mediation might have called forth, by uttering this address in form of apostrophe—“There are strange entanglings of the mind—some kneel and make a wailing for atonement; some stand out against revilings with a stony look, and let their hearts burst rather than be pitied—Pride! dismal pride; that's the stumbling-block.”

The Baroness seemed eager to escape the argument—She bade me prepare to quit the glen, and expressed her anxiety to see Helen. Without giving me opportunity for reply, she took my aunt's hand;—"you my good friend will accompany us into Germany—do not start; change of scene is necessary for all—your husband has already acquiesced—Take what time you please for partings and arrangements—I will wait your leisure any where but *here*—What sun can brighten the melancholy aspect of the scenes *she* used to move in?—You are not going into exile," resumed the Baroness, observing the glistening eyes that were wandering regretfully; "you shall return, your children too, when—I am old my friend—I wish to see my grandson's rights established—to see Helen happy—The grave contains my husband and two sons, my Marion and her mother—the grave is pleasant to my thoughts—that which has tortured us will there be pulseless—my happy ones are beckoning—you shall close my eyes and then—"

"Ah Baroness," sobbed out my aunt, "before then, long before then you will forgive—she is your daughter Baroness, your own child!"

The Baroness dropped the hand she had till then affectionately retained, and left the room—

“Blessed are the poor in spirit!” said my aunt—“The class is rare—even that generous-souled woman has the family stamp—what between the mother’s high spirit and the father’s fierce spirit, it would be a miracle if Margaret Wallenberg—”

“Who is she?” I ejaculated, “where is she?”

“Is it possible she could know you, and speak to you, without acknowledging her children! The Marchioness Dellival was Margaret Wallenberg.”

I reeled: the dim reflection of things passed was represented in a speckless mirror—“Until this hour I thought that Margaret Wallenberg was dead.”

“She is dead,” said my aunt solemnly; “I have had a letter from Miss Berrington—Lady Dellival burst a blood-vessel and died a few hours after her interview with her mother.”

I felt awe-stricken—my aunt resumed—

“Oh Walter! the scene was terrible—That dear young lady bade me break it to you and to the irritated mother—Poor woman! I thought

before I told it, I might win on her to say, God forgive my child!" My aunt wept, but continued to speak—"Baron Derentsi, it seems, was sent by the Doctors from one Spa to another till he died at Baden. Mr. Fielding and the Baroness went with him—just as he was buried Miss Berrington's letter about our darling reached them—they set off instantly for London, thinking you were there—Madame Wallenberg went to her daughter's house—'There was no softening of words; high spirit and haughty spirit were not likely to come to a self-surrender: the Baroness left the house irritated beyond all control—Lady Dellival locked herself into her room—restrained passion or, God send it might be so, restrained penitence, burst the springs of life—she was found, just not dead—the hemorrhage was stopped but the Doctor gave her over—She died the same night—Lord Dellival was too ill to see her, but that fine, frank-spirited young creature, watched by the lonely death-bed."

"Miss Berrington?"

"Yes, Miss Berrington—How she wins on one! 'tis wonderful!—her letter took off all

the rancour that I felt for Margaret; I cried for the self-willed woman as I would for my own sister."

"Did Lady Dellival," said I,—“Did my mother—” I hesitated; the conjunction was too astounding to be easily admitted—My aunt seemed to penetrate my thoughts.

“It was many a long day, Walter, before I myself, could persuade myself she was really your mother, though I knew she must be—Dear Julia had only one child. But for a fatal chance, I should have been glad enough to believe that all three of you were hers—The Baroness talks a deal of our adopting you; there was no merit in the case—your poor father was in prison, and Margaret left you with us, and went to sue for pardon from the King—No pardon came however.—Gerald’s death broke down my Fitzgerald sadly—there was nothing but you, children, to comfort us—The widow stayed with some grand folk she got acquainted with, and, without even a three months’ mourning, married again—We expected every day some claimant for you and Helen, and, to say the truth, we dreaded it—As for

Marion we reckoned her our own—her step-mother had used her harshly, Lord Gerald had bequeathed her to us—There was hereditary blight in her gran'mother's family—her gran'-father (the Baroness's brother) from seeing the lamentable effects perpetuated even to his wife, had interdicted his daughter's marrying; and we considered it a solemn duty to keep the grand-daughter from a transgression which had had so calamitous an end—but I have told you *Julia's* story.

“After a time Margaret wrote, beseeching us to keep the children for a year or two, as her husband was averse from patronizing the inheritors of a name so *recently degraded*—these were the very words—she forgot how eager she had been to take that name—Poor Fitzgerald! mild as he is, his high blood mounted; I should not mind a blusterer's rage one pin, but the passion of the peaceful man has something awful—He that had never used the name of God, save in prayer or blessing, now ratified with that holy word, a vow, never to let the little cast-aways weep for her desertion—never to let them hear of a mother who could wantonly fix

upon such innocents the stigma of disgrace ! He forbade my uttering her name, or ever recurring to her story. The Baroness, with whom he corresponded, entered into his views and feelings ; the Baron long before had renounced his daughter ; but, different from his high-souled wife, he implicated you poor babes ! in your parent's errors.

“ Fitzgerald wrote to Margaret the sternest letter he ever penned ; he told her he had withdrawn her children to that seclusion which their mother's, not their father's conduct had condemned them to. We had one letter in reply, just in keeping with Margaret's character ; there was not a glimmer of anger, extenuation, or regret—enclosed was a bill for your expenses, and a notice that the same sum should be transmitted annually until she should choose to send for you—What a passion I was in ! I would have put bill and letter in the fire ; Fitzgerald behaved wiser, he sent both back to her—I longed to tell her a little of my mind, but my husband wouldn't let me ; so we blotted her from our thoughts and brought you up as orphans.”

“And did she not, even on her death-bed, express sorrow? did she die without acknowledging us?”

“Her sorrow was between her and Heaven,” replied my aunt. “She died without a tear: still there might have been an inward martyrdom—She listened to the word of peace, and pressed Miss Berrington’s hand, but never spoke—perhaps she could not speak, poor creature!—Her last act did, certainly, imply an avowal of her children—About an hour before she died, she motioned for her jewel-case, and took a picture set in diamonds from a secret drawer—it must be the picture of her first husband, for she placed it in a box, and wrote upon the lid—‘To be given to Walter Fitzgerald’—She then locked the jewel case, labelled it, ‘for *my daughter*, Helen Fitzgerald,’ and gave the key to Miss Berrington—Could any one see Helen and not love her!”

“Thank Heaven!” I ejaculated, “there *was* compunction; she *did* betray emotion at sight of Helen—Her journey to the glen too—that might have been to make my uncle some atonement.”

"I rather think not," said my aunt, musing; "Margaret's spirit was too rebellious—*She* bend! no, no—I have conned that journey over and over, and I fancy that hearing her brother-in-law had married a Fitzgerald she might apprehend some divulgement; for Heaven only knows whether Lord Dellival was aware that she had children when he married her; who can travel through the bye-ways of such a mind as hers?—A letter came to us, sealed with black, five years ago; it was a blank cover containing money; we sent it back to her."

My aunt paused; the mourning seal recalled a circumstance Lord Sanford and Miss Berrington had mentioned, that Lord and Lady Dellival had lost two sons—

"Here Walter," resumed my aunt, taking down old Bunyan—"here are the actors of the story—The Great-hearts and the Feeble-minds. He only should judge Margaret from whom we hold our varied lot of talents—Fitzgerald often said that every good trait in those Wallenbergs was shrivelled by the slavery-brand of pride—Who knows whether that lofty spirit so beautiful in Helen might not have been puffed into

haughtiness beneath their training !—The accident that lamed you, choked the evil seed ; yet once or twice I thought 'twas sprouting out again. Learn of Mr. Fielding Walter—study your own nature—harden the weak points—give yourself to that charity that vaunteth not, neither condemneth—That's the true philosophy—Ah child there was one among us highly gifted, for she followed the great Master—the poor and lowly were her best-loved brethren—Truly *she* was Humble-mind."

The re-entrance of Berga interrupted us : she approached me by a march more than usually methodical ; absorbed by the story I had heard I scarcely noticed the *Fräulein*, until a gradual bending of the little figure augured a prostration—To prevent this extraordinary homage I abruptly caught, and held her up.

"*Mein Herr ! mein lieber Herr ! Herr Walter von Wallenberg !*" stammered the *Fräulein*, half sobbing—This address was followed by a discourse from which I collected, that she had considered us the descendants of Julia Derentsi, but that finding we were Wallenbergs, she transferred to me, as, his successor, the love

and the allegiance accorded to her ancient Lord. In as good German as I could muster, I tried to make her comprehend that the children of Baron Derentsi were before me in succession to this vehement attachment—Berga's "*nein, nein doch,*" was reiterated in a tone of some asperity.—We might have gone on for ever endowing and disclaiming, had not my aunt, guessing at the cause of controversy, arranged the matter simply, by stating, that Baron Derentsi had left no children.

"*Nein Kind, nein Kind, Du Baron Wallenberg, du,*" said Berga, gluing her regards on me, as she enumerated the castles, lands, and forests I was heir to—Then came the list of titles wound up by that of Derentsi.

"No Walter, no," said my aunt, wiping her eyes, "Marion's child is rightful heir of the Derentsi's."

CHAPTER XVII.

“ Child of sad presage and baptized in tears.”

IN my retreat of *Schloss Wallenberg* I resume this memoir. Many years have passed since I commenced it in a far distant, far different, but ever dear location.

A belt of noble forest ground shelters castle Wallenberg on the North and West ; the South is guarded by the mountains of Bohemia ; in front, gardens, fertile pastures, meadows and corn fields, extend far as the eye can reach ; and the broad Elbe, like a potent spirit, rolls through the peaceful banks it enriches and secures.

The aspect of German life, and German mind and manners, had been made familiar to me by Madame Wallenberg ; and depressed by retrospections, which, even if I could, I would not banish, I infinitely preferred to the sprightly elegances of lighter circles, the rich, old fashioned, stately objects of my Saxon locale, and the living originals as primitive and stately. I long thought that nothing in revolving time could bring gladness to my heart again. One image set in memory's stronghold threw a shade on my existence. Helen, too, was barely rescued from an early grave. Though married to such a man as Fielding, though fulfilling to the letter that character of wife and mother sketched for his son's partner by Sir William, yet time seemed to administer no balm to her affliction. She would often quit the scene of social pleasures and festivities, struck by some forcible recollection of her sister, and accompany me to the gloomiest forest nook to weep for Marion.

A trying occurrence, the only painful one since our bye-gone tribulations, softened this intense regret. We still talk of Marion as

devotedly, but could a miracle be operated, and she be restored at our call, we would be silent now; the wild roses that shed their perfume on her resting-place should not be disturbed; the vestments of the grave should enwrap her rather than the garments of pageantry, and the death-fillet rather than the coronet.

About three years from the transplanting of our little colony I heard accidentally, through a tourist who visited *Schloss Wallenberg*, that Lord Sanford was Marquis Dellival, and was married a second time. I had written to him two years before, when the heat of resentment was mitigated, a cold formal letter, informing him that I held the revenues of the Derentsi estate in trust for my nephew. His reply was constrained and ambiguous, though tempered by a graceful plausibility that might have been esteemed superfluous and out of course in an address to Walter Fitzgerald unknown and untitled. The slim veil of sentiment with which he affected to disguise his real indifference disgusted me. I tore his letter and thought no more of him. But the intelligence of his second marriage restored my half

numbed yearning towards the child of my lost sister. Had I not considered the boy as Lord Sanford's pampered heir, the engrosser of those cares and tendernesses, which, if divided justly, might have saved his mother, he would have occupied an exclusive place in my affections. Now, however, I viewed him in an altered state, unnoticed, slighted, cowering before a haughty step-mother. In this new attachment I saw a cause for the slight allusion made by Lord Sanford to his son, once so vauntingly paraded as the future Marquis Dellival. The jealous throes that choked my kindlier feelings for the child, subsided; he might now be the castaway that I had been—my resolution was taken—a course of serious study under Fielding, had cleared the paths of science, and made me somewhat better qualified for an instructor than I had been under the illusions of my *attic* days. It would dissipate my gloom to become the tutor of my nephew. I would make over to him the inheritance I had destined for him, only on condition that he was surrendered to my adoption. To negotiate this matter I would even give myself

the pain of communicating, personally, with Lord Dellival.

I wrote to Fielding, who was then at his seat in Hertfordshire, unfolding my intentions, but such was my anxiety to get rid of the perpetual hauntings of this unpleasant meeting, that I arrived in England nearly with my letter. The Marquis I discovered was at Dellival house. I proceeded instantly to London; and, pausing only to visit my worthy host of Tower hill, I drove to Portman Square.

A carriage stopped nearly with my own, but in advance. I had a transient glimpse of a Lady, who ran up the steps and disappeared. Quick emotion said at once "It is Marion's successor, the new Marchioness." My feelings were not enviable as I followed the servant through the corridors and picture gallery. I was ushered into, and left alone in an apartment, at sight of which time seemed annihilated. Every circumstance of the interview with my mother was unerringly retraced as if it had occurred the hour before; the very sensations were renewed, intense and overpowering. I fixed my eyes upon the folding doors

which terminated the range, losing in the profoundness of contemplation, even the memory of what had brought me hither.

The servant re-entered. Lord Dellival was engaged, but if half an hour's delay would not incommode—I hastily signified assent, and was again alone.

Harrowing impressions became more vivid every moment—faint echoes of long-gone sounds seemed floating. With a total obliteration of the present, and a vague idea that I was labouring under some illusion which a bold examination would disperse, I walked through the intervening rooms and flung open the folding doors, half expecting to behold the shades of the departed. The first object my eyes rested on was a child seated upon the floor, surrounded by toys, and fondling a tame rabbit. Clusters of radiant hair shaded the boy's face. By that mysterious thrill which recognises secret affinities I knew my nephew, caught him to my heart, and kissed him passionately. A strange, inarticulate, and almost inaudible murmur startled me. I placed him on the couch, and with a shaking hand parted the thick curls.

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One look was sufficient—my breath ebbed—I turned away, but the face was before me wherever I turned—that melancholy face! The features were moulded even to the perfection of his mother's, but the forehead retreated fearfully, and the long, dark, silken lashes drooped over eyes which moved slowly round without a ray of meaning.

And thus had terminated the hopes and vanities concentrated in this child. But for one staunch friend the little mindless creature would have been left to the doubtful guardianship of servants, perhaps an object of coarse ribaldry. It is presumptuous to speculate, or to determine by what infringement of positive eternal laws such evils are originated? The mischief was undoubtedly inherent, yet, haply, Lord Sanford's wilfulness had deepened the calamity. Had Marion been indulged in her yearnings for home, had she been nursed by those with whom her loving nature would have had free expansion, this creature, blighted early, might have worn a higher impress.

I hung over the boy, trying to interpret his senseless babble, now and then broken by a

moan. After a while his dumb associate scraped at the bed-pillar impatiently. I took the little animal and laid it by the child, whose moaning ceased upon the instant. Thank Heaven! there was at least the instinct of affection. Hugging close his favorite, with a tranquil sigh he closed his large, melancholy, eyes.

"Blind mortals!" I exclaimed, "we mourned for her, we despaired—Marion, dear Marion!"

"She is where no face of terror can appal her," said a low, kind, voice; her child is *my* nursling now."

I drew aside the hangings; the vision of the lady who had preceded me was uppermost in my mind—Miss Berrington then was Marchioness Dellival!

"Am I to address you as my old friend, Walter Fitzgerald, or, as Baron Wallenberg?" said the lady, extending her hand.

"By whatever title you please, Madam," I replied, stiffly.

She looked surprised, but not more surprised than I felt at the novel emotion which revealed to me the nature of my unnameable sentiment

for Emily Berrington. I had never ventured to suppose I was persuaded of her indifference: and the sudden development of my attachment piled such a mountain weight upon my heart, that the words were suffocated with which I would have burdened my painful consciousness.

"I heard from Helen yesterday," she resumed. "she prepared me for your arrival, but I little thought to see you here, and less thought I to see you thus estranged from 'auld acquaintance!'"

I tried to put on a more friendly aspect but I failed not.

"You are come to deprive me of my little charge I fear," pursued the lady. "At first I loved him for his mother's sake; now I love him for his own." Her eyes filled with tears.

"Oh! Lady Dellival," I cried, half choked by my emotion, "as you are his protector I will not withdraw him—he is secure of kindness."

"Lady Dellival!" she repeated with a glance of perturbation—"Lady Dellival!—where?—Helen do not fatigue yourself with explanation: I can decipher. You had the vanity to think I

had followed your advice, though of olden date, and had exalted myself into Marchioness Delli-val!—How conceited you must be!”

I could as little hide delight as disappointment. I pressed Miss Berrington’s unoffered hand so ardently that she withdrew it, asking, with a touch of her former humour, whether I meant to give her a practical definition of that equivocal epithet “*Blarney*,” or whether I mistook her for Miss Philly Horrigan. But her banter did not confuse me; her mortified look had been succeeded by smiles beaming cordially, yet she must have understood the motive of my coldness.

“Notwithstanding the *characteristic* effrontery evinced in your mistake,” said she, “I am pleased again to admit you within the bounds of our ancient platonism. Your errand indeed is not so grateful.” Her manner changed to deep seriousness. “That child, to others an object of pity or indifference is to me a hallowed creature: his utter helplessness, his irresponsible nature, affect me so deeply, that were I his mother grief for his mournful deficiency would be effaced by the certainty of his beati-

tude. His tendencies, though unguided by reason, are all attaching : love is instinctive ; his tenderness for beings scarcely more irrational than himself, his softness, his docility, are inexpressibly endearing. Poor child ! the homage paid to him was short-lived : the discovery of his misfortune was followed by his total abandonment to menials : he was chidden and corrected by his callous governors, but his mute obedience disarmed even them. I would have written to you had I not determined to act for you and Helen, to be his mother. I learned from your good aunt how sorely you lamented and—I could not torture the bruised spirit. Dear child !”—She kissed the golden hair that lay in clusters on the pillow. “ You will be given up too willingly !—were you the lordly tyrant of a nursery, using your intellect only to gratify arrogance or malice, you would be valued ; but, blameless even as your—” her lip trembled. “ Oh I shall find it difficult to wean my heart from you !”

“ I will not remove the child,” said I, “ unless you be joined with me in his future guardianship. We have known each other long

enough Miss Berrington to feel—friendship on your side perhaps—but on mine unchangeable affection.”

Miss Berrington’s beautiful color was deepened. She raised her brow obliquely as if a jest was gathering, but it instantaneously sank into its former line.

“I will examine into the date and character of my regard for you,” she said, gravely—“Whatever stamp it carries now, it bore the same impression when you were poor; that is, from the time I became thoroughly acquainted with you.”

There was nothing discouraging in this ingenuous reply, but the diffident are prone to doubt. My personal deficiencies became aggravated by a jaundiced introspect—“I knew it was impossible, Miss Berrington, that you could—”

Thus far had I stammered when the opening of a door seasonably broke off a felicitous description of myself. Lord Dellival advanced with an eagerness none could have pronounced affected, bidding me welcome with such cordial

grace that I thought he had mistaken the person of his visitor, and I bluntly said so.

"There is not the serious alteration you imply," he answered, as if misconceiving the scope of my remark. "Taller indeed and somewhat more robust: were I speaking of you I should say improved—Ha! Fanny—brilliant as ever! In this emporium of hectics and hollow cheeks how do you preserve that dimpled *teint de rose*?"

"It might be the effect of blushing for your Lordship," said Miss Berrington.

His Lordship promptly bowed, as if acknowledging a compliment. "You will dine with me Walter?—I wish the Marchioness were arrived: I long to introduce her to Miss Berrington."

"Better not my Lord," she answered quietly. "You once gave a proof of exquisite discernment; I would rather preserve to you at least, my good opinion of your taste."

His Lordship bowed lower than before.—
"Oh! you need not apprehend a rival Fanny. *You* to the Marchioness are as the lyric to the

ode—your uncopyable *jeu de visage* secures you.—She might have been my sister-in-law,” he added, carelessly addressing me. “The late Marquis was her suitor just a year ago—but he was treble her age.”

“And yet I would have preferred him to his younger brother,” said Miss Berrington.

“I knew the measure of your esteem for me,” said Lord Dellival, but I did not choose the world should ; therefore—”

“These flippancies are rather out of season,” said Miss Berrington. “From a less polished *étégant* I should have called them impertinences—You,” she added, turning to me, “are, I perceive, tired as I am of this trifling—Lord Dellival at heart is anxious as you are to abridge this interview, notwithstanding his indefatigable levity.”

Miss Berrington was mistaken ; the levity she complained of was to me an unlooked for relief : there was no grimace of sentiment : Lord Dellival was on the scene in his own character : he had avoided reverting to events which would have awakened my shuddering

antipathies; I felt almost obliged for the good taste of his inimitable assurance—What I had apprehended was the measured step, the solemn caricature of sympathy.—The object of my visit was set forth pointedly, but without those bursts of indignation which hypocrisy would have met—His Lordship's *strong* affection for his first-born, I remarked, might interfere with *future* claims on his paternity; therefore I would relieve his conscience by adopting my nephew.

Without a symptom of disturbance he replied—"I have just received a letter from Fielding; he makes the same request."

"But compliance is impossible," added Miss Berrington—"the feelings of a *father*!"

This sarcasm *did* cost Lord Dellival a blush: he stooped to kiss the slumberer, exclaiming—"Poor little fellow! it is some months since I saw him; we have but just returned from the continent—How beautiful he looks in repose!—they tell me he is mild and tractable: but—you understand—it was a terrible discovery!—Poor little fellow! the sight of him

may affect the Marchioness; and change of scene may be of benefit—You will not ask me to part with him for ever?”

Thus did Lord Dellival give up his son, confident of a successor more suited to the bent of his ambition—But he has had no other child; there is no lineal heir to the counterfeits he valued beyond real gems—Time, I understand, is converting his pungent vivacity into the acrimonious petulance of a disappointed man, and it is rumoured that his high-toned wife delights to aggravate his splanetic moods—Does he ever contrast with her, the gentle creature he deserted?—In the pride of the Wallenbergs there was some corrective principle, a sense of the responsibilities of rank, a craving for glory, value for an unsullied name; it was the self-reverence of a stern aristarchy—but the pride of the Dellivals had no lofty aspiration; it was puerile and contemptible, satisfied with the insipid accessories of rank, feeding on servile adulation, and ambitious only of distinction in the ephemeral annals of a vapid aristocracy.

If I omit the course of my wooing and win-

ning Fanny Berrington, it is not because *I* feel it a dull act in my drama, but that I consider love scenes, like love letters, pleasant only to the actual participants, and very impertinent to casual auditors and standers-by.

My wife was an only child, an orphan from her earliest years; therefore no strict local bonds interfered with her migration to our Saxon settlement. To me, the great Metropolis seemed a human wilderness, and Fanny, with an eye and a heart equally alive to the sublime, the common, and the ludicrous, is happy everywhere. She was received by our elders with cordial approval: she is the only sprightly *adult* member of our circle, but her *vis comica* is under the control of a benevolent spirit, and diffuses a quiet, lasting sunshine.

The aspect of this country, the wild *Sagas* and Tuetonic *Märchen* * then rife among the German fiction-hunters, led her back to literature; but, adopting Helen's hint, she wished to exercise her imaginative resources for the advancement of a nobler end than mere amuse-

* Traditionary tales.

ment. Sorrowful occurrences had prevented the revision of Helen's manuscript, and the conclusion of Fanny Berrington's, but my wife now spoke seriously of launching her 'galley and its consort.' One day by accident she lighted on my neglected journal, and, with the usual prompt determination of her sex, made up her mind, without consulting me, that under fair disguise it should go forth as a surveying ship, by favor of which, the more important barks might weather rocks and breakers. It is at her request that I resume my narrative, but unless I am the survivor of our primitive little mountain-band it shall never meet the public eye.

Let no one set limits to the possible—I who once thought myself an isolated being, parted by an insuperable barrier from social blessings, am surrounded by a family of blooming children, and am beloved by the woman most calculated to temper my habitual seriousness and correct my indolence.

Of our Elders we have lost but one, and she was full of years. My aunt and uncle are domesticated in a land which in some of its

scenic features resembles, on a grander scale, our never forgotten glen. Among the little group of prattlers (Fieldings and Fitzgeralds) who rush to our foster parents for blessing and good night, there is one blue-eyed Fay, whose ringlets dance and sparkle with her frolic movements—she always meets a fonder look, a closer pressure—if you ask her name, she lisps out ‘Marion,’ and tosses her merry head proud of the enchantment the name dispenses. Her especial *Rittersmann* is Slauveen. The child is often missed from her companions and found within the leafy grating of some forest tree, listening to the Esquire’s stories of her namesake. She alone was suffered to burden the sunken back of Lanty Maw, for Lanty

“ Lord of park and hill
Was let to wander at his will,”

and had a trusty servant’s sepulture.

The ill-starred child of our adoption, too, attached himself to little Marion with all the force of his instinctive tenderness. She was our first-born, a novel interloper, who soon became the chosen of the dumb associates on

whom he lavished his caresses. When placed beside the infant's cradle he would stroke the velvet cheek, fondle the dimpled hand; and moan piteously if led away for rest or exercise. Mute objects were his passion, or such as could only utter sounds plaintive as his own; thence we concluded that Marion's lisping prattle would dissolve the charm; but the slow developement of infant speech had nothing startling for his timid nature; the babe's utterance seemed tuned by her affections, it was low and musical; she would coo her fondness, stretch out her little arms towards the boy, and seem to comprehend his mournful language. It was beautiful to see the girl grow into the protector of her hapless cousin: she was taught to respect his misfortune, and to co-operate with those around her in securing to him all the vegetative happiness of which he was susceptible. No pain or annoyance reached him that Marion could prevent. The office of guide, to which she was elected, made her prematurely cautious: she would never commit him to a path she had not previously explored: she imitated his cadences which fell like a sorrowful lullaby, so

that the children might almost be said to converse together, and though five years younger, she erected herself into the stout repeller of any casual aggression that threatened him.

In spite of his deficiency, his heart-touching aspect made him almost idolized—Small of stature and femininely delicate, his softness seemed a protecting halo shed by the Divinity—The domestics considered him a sanctified creature whom it would be sacrilege to offend—We did not attempt to instruct him, there was no mind to educate; and he scarcely required training, for he was harmless as the doves he used to play with.

Without any discoverable cause the boy declined just as he reached his eleventh year—Helen, Fielding, my wife, our whole household watched him incessantly. Marion seldom left his bed side: her crib was placed near his, and the melancholy tones she had learned of himself were his nightly lullaby—I hope he felt no pain, for he died without a moan, embracing his little nurse; the most uncomplaining spirit that ever took its flight to Heaven!

This event opened old wounds: we do not

confess that we lament, but we feel we do— Our little girl, too young to understand the mercy shewn in the removal of her favorite, cries when she should sleep, and complains that her heart is sore—My wife smothers her own grief, watches her child, and lectures Helen, who sits with our weeping Elders, talking of her sister, and weaving the boy's silken tresses with his mother's.

Fielding, alarmed at his wife's pale face, suggested a temporary change of residence for all of us. He is obliged to return to England, as the term of his annual visit here is expired, and Sir William grumbles: he urged our accompanying him. But to this scheme I felt unconquerable repugnance—"Dellival Castle is near Sir William Fielding's country seat: I might meet the Marquis."

"But we shall be safe from that annoyance in Ireland," said my wife, to whom I had expressed this apprehension.

"Ireland!"

"Yes," replied Fanny; "I long to make another flitting, and to get acquainted with the sybil of your diary, Grace McQuillan. Helen

and Fielding will join us in Cork. I shall despatch a peremptory mandate to the only man besides yourself I was fool enough to fall in love with; my *gray* Lothario will do my bidding depend on it. Sir William and our Patriarch, the Fitzgerald, shall be introduced at last; for I intend our Eklers should perform a pilgrimage to their ancient shrine.—You shake your head—fear nothing—they have vigor for the journey and inclination too. Your uncle has been growing young ever since the rattle, Fanny Berrington, taught him her philosophy. You are of the class lymphatico-nervous, and view things through a leaden haze—I belong to the sanguineous, and coming events take the *tint de rose*.—Our bairns shall see their father's land; it will restore our little witch. We shall make a twelve-month's tour, and return to our Baronial Halls with some rare exotic—a "Bullock or O'Toole. Just signify assent, and our train shall be *en route* within a fortnight."

This project, contrary to my surmises, met universal approbation—the mere mention of it called up irrepressible longings. Helen and my aunt anticipated their meeting with the

lonely tenant of the Sheeling, whom no coaxing could allure from her rock-bound home. Slauveen diverts the grief of little Marion with promises to shew her *real fairy land* and to take her to her namesake's grave.

Berga Schmidt, since the death of our honored Madame Wallenberg, had secluded herself from busy life, but the rumour of a visit to the glen set in motion her nearly sinewless joints. She marched from out her shell, kissed a black crucifix, and vowed a vow to spend the remainder of her days with her *lieber freund* Grace McQuillan, the only one from whom the story of her young affections for the Patagonian martyr had drawn tears. Fanny brightens these melancholy pictures with sketches of Bullocks and O'Tooles, with whom she bargains we must spend a third of our Irish flitting; and Philip Nabbs, my lady's favorite page, his eyes dancing with the fervency of national fun, capers in the 'broidery room to the grave disquiet of the loom-maidens.—In reply to their dignified rebukes, Phil assures them, that the Saxon girls are "nothin' so

limber as the girls o' Cork," and worries them with wonderin whether "the turnkey thief be dead an' Breesthough be alive."

All is ready for our pilgrimage—The body of my nephew is embalmed; he shall be laid beside his mother—Will my heart leap as it did once at sight of my poor country?

THE END.

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